

The Basic Confession

of the

Evangelical Lutheran Church.

With an
**Historical Introduction and Brief Explanatory
Notes Provided.**

Presented to the Lutheran Christians on the 400th Anniversary
of the Augsburg Confession

by
F. Pieper.



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Foreword.

This is the reprint of a small paper written by the undersigned fifty years ago to celebrate the three hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Augsburg Confession. The reprint was in no way initiated by me. Our publishing house informed me: "The committee for the four hundred year jubilee celebration of the Augustana suggests to us the idea of offering your work of 1880 to our audience again as a jubilee gift". I believed that I should refuse my consent. I still remembered that already fifty years ago I did not really like the writing. It had to be written in a hurry due to circumstances, and I thought that it did not do justice to the great cause. Now, a few days ago, I was advised to leave it to other people to judge whether the writing of fifty years ago could still be of service today. So the booklet may go out again.

Fifty years ago, our publishing house wanted the book to correspond as closely as possible to Dr. Walther's [*Formula of Concord*] *Core and Star* in terms of scope and arrangement of the material. Three years earlier, in 1877, on the occasion of the tercentenary of the completion of the Formula of Concord, Walther had published the small book *Der Konkordienformel Kern und Stern*. He did this on behalf of the Synodal Conference. He reports in the preface: "The Venerable Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America has commissioned the undersigned to reprint for our dear Lutheran Christian people the first part of the Formula of Concord, which contains the core and star, i.e., a complete excerpt of the same, to add any remarks necessary for explanation, and to preface it with a historical introduction." In the historical introduction Walther shows how, after the doctrinal disputes which broke out soon after Luther's

death and threatened the Church of the Reformation with ruin, by God's grace the Formula of Concord came into being in 1577. Walther calls the Formula of Concord "the glorious final confession of our dear Evangelical Lutheran Church" and "probably the last pure-sounding confessional trumpet sound of this very last time." In the second part of *Kern und Stern* [*Core and Star*] the "Summary Conception" of the Formula of Concord (called *Epitome* in Latin) is printed in its entirety with the addition of such short notes "which may serve to explain" it.

Three years later (1880), when it was a question of writing a small book on the Augsburg Confession for our Lutheran Christian people, our publishing house and also one of my colleagues wanted me to design my book in such a way that it resembled "Kern und Stern" in terms of number of pages and external layout. I have complied with this wish. In the preceding historical introduction, I tried to show how, after the ghastly darkness under the papacy, the glorious light came to shine upon us from the Augsburg Confession. Spalatin said of the day on which this glorious confession of the entire Christian doctrine was presented before all of Germany, indeed before the whole world: "That was a day on which one of the greatest works that ever happened on earth took place, a day on which a confession in Latin and German, written with divine Scripture at the bottom and with such glimpses, was read out, the like of which had not been seen in a thousand years, indeed while the world stood." That is not too much to say. In earlier church assemblies that became famous, even if they confessed the truth in the main, only individual pieces of Christian doctrine were presented. In the Augsburg Confession the whole Christian doctrine and also the right form of a Christian life, as it comes from the Gospel, is set forth and taught and known before all the world. Luther rejoices on the occasion of the day of Augsburg: "I am only glad to live in a time when Christ has been publicly proclaimed by so many dear confessors in such a respectable assembly and through this glorious

confession, and the saying has come true: 'I speak of thy testimonies before "kings."'" And the Formula of Concord declares the Augsburg Confession to be a "purely Christian symbol, by which right Christians of this time are to be found next to God's Word. Even the latter is not too much to say, but is so certainly true that, on the one hand, this symbol corresponds exactly to the Holy Scriptures in all the doctrines presented, and, on the other hand, the Christians of our time are still threatened by the same false doctrines of the Papal Church and the various sects. As God wants his Gospel to be taught in the whole world, so He has also ordained Luther, the Reformer of His church chosen by Him, the restorer of the Gospel, to be a teacher and witness of the truth to all nations.

As for the historical introduction to the booklet, it was not intended to present a complete history of the great period from Worms to Augsburg. It was also refrained from going into side issues in which the reports from that time do not completely agree. The purpose of the introduction was to group such events "that let us look into the heart of the great confessors, into their struggle and victory". In our time there is a special interest in Christian psychology of religion. An important subject! But we recommend to all who want to continue to look in this field to read also the documents that give us a clear insight into the heart of the Confessors of Augsburg. What godly confessors stand before our eyes, especially when we look at the princes and other persons of high standing in the world! Johann Brenz wrote: "Our princes are most steadfast in the confession of the Gospel. And truly, when I consider their so great steadfastness, I am seized with no small feeling of shame because of the fear with which we poor beggars [he meant the theologians] are filled toward the imperial majesty." When some theologians wavered in confession, they were supported by the princes

and kept on the right track. The Elector of Saxony clearly and sharply confronted the either-or: "Either deny God or deny the world - who can doubt which is best? God has made me an elector of the empire, which I have never been worth. He instructed his councillors: "Tell my scholars to do what is right, to praise God, and not to look at me or my country and people". Such joyful confession not only fills one with wonder at the power of God's grace, but can also fill one's eyes with tears of gratitude and joy.

As for the second part of this small writing, the doctrinal part, first the text of the Augsburg Confession is printed in full. In the short notes added to the individual articles, the statement of the confession and the scriptural basis for it are pointed out; then it is recalled which heresies also of our time contradict the scriptural confession of Augsburg. Here the temptation was obvious to add more details and names from more recent times in the reprint. We refrained from this in order not to give the booklet the form of a small "comparative symbolism". If you want to know more names of false teachers of recent and latest times, we refer you to Günther's "Popular Symbolics", which has been continued by Dr. L. Fürbringer up to our time. Only in the 25th article, "On Confession," and the 26th article, "On the Distinction of Meats" where in the first printing only Article 11, "On Confession," and Article 15, "On Church Ordinances," were referred back to, have some remarks been added. When reading through the old print, here and there a more appropriate word was substituted for a less appropriate one.

We conclude this preface to the reprint with a few words from the "Preface" of 1880: "We also confess the confession delivered on June 25, 1530 as our confession, because

we have recognized this confession as agreeing with the Word of God. We speak with our fathers at the time of the Formula of Concord: ‘We profess from the bottom of our hearts to the same Christian Augsburg Confession, which is well-founded in God's Word, we stick to the same simple, bright and pure understanding as those the words bring with them, and consider the Confession intended to be a purely Christian symbol, with which among right Christians at this time should be found next to God's Word.’” God grant in grace that with sincere thanks to Him who has given this glorious Confession to our church, we may celebrate the four hundredth anniversary of the Augsburg Confession in a proper manner!

St. Louis, Mo, Feb. 11, 1930.

F. Pieper.

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First part.

Historical introduction.

First chapter. ^

Short overview of the events from the beginning of the Reformation to the Diet of Augsburg.

In order to better understand the period in which the Augsburg Confession was adopted, and thus the Confession itself, it is necessary to briefly review the main events from the beginning of the Reformation, from 1517 to 1530.

When Luther left the church, he did not think that he was called to be a reformer of the church. He had come to the realization, through years of intense soul-searching and diligent study of the Holy Scriptures, which at that time had been completely forgotten, that there was no other way for a person to obtain forgiveness of sins than through repentance and faith. He had learned in the school of the Holy Spirit: a man must recognize himself as a sinner worthy of condemnation through the law and then believe the gospel, which gives God's grace freely and gratuitously to the crushed sinner for the sake of Christ's merit. This is how Luther taught his students as a professor, and this is how he taught his congregation as a preacher and pastor. Then, in 1517, things happened that caused him the greatest excitement. A number of his parishioners confessed great sins to him in confession; but when Luther exhorted them to serious repentance, they showed him letters of indulgence bought from the indulgence merchant Tetzel and thought they had forgiveness of their sins even without repentance and faith by virtue of the indulgence slips purchased for money. Luther refused absolution to such confessors. He was therefore sued by Tetzel. And

Tetzel now raged against Luther as a heretic and despiser of the papal chair. At that time Luther did not even suspect that he had "touched the Pope's crown and the bellies of the monks". At that time he still thought that the indulgence mischief was being practiced without the knowledge and approval of the pope. But he was soon taught otherwise. Respected papist theologians and high dignitaries fiercely opposed Luther in their writings and called him a heretic. Pope Leo X., who had initially thought that it was an insignificant monkish quarrel, wrote on August 23, 1518 to the Elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise, in whose country Luther was: "We command you to see to it that Martin Luther is brought under the power and jurisdiction of the Holy See." In 1520, when the Elector of Saxony could not be persuaded to surrender Luther, and even disguised friendliness had not brought the monk to the desired submission, Luther was declared a heretic by a papal bull and, if he did not recant within sixty days, was put under ban. Insolent and presumptuous, the pope ordered all the authorities in Germany to "personally capture Luther and send him captive" and his followers. In the meantime, Luther's eyes had opened more and more to the real nature of the papacy. In the papal bull, the clearest teachings of the Word of God were condemned. Thus Luther recognized that the pope was not the "holy father" but "the Antichrist and Satan's chair," and instead of recanting, on December 10, 1520, in front of the Elster Gate at Wittenberg, in the presence of a large crowd, he burned the papal bull together with the canon law with the words: "Because you have grieved the Holy One of the LORD, let eternal fire cheat and consume you."

With this, Luther had publicly renounced the Roman church and the pope. A small group of friends, in whose hearts the Word of God preached by Luther had done its divine work, cheered him. The great crowd of the papally minded was inflamed with rage. Duke George of Saxony and other German princes wanted in all seriousness to act according to the pope's bull. The King of Spain, Charles V, who had been elected German emperor in the meantime, had also been greatly incensed against Luther, especially by the papal envoy Aleander and his Spanish and Italian councillors.

This was the state of affairs when Emperor Charles summoned Luther to appear before the Diet of Worms. Despite the urgent warnings of his friends, he appeared and stood before the great imperial assembly on April 17 and 18, 1521. He was to recant the books he had written up to that time and submit to the pope and the councils. Luther's final answer was: "Because Your Imperial Majesty and Electoral and Princely Graces desire a simple, plain, correct answer, I will give one that shall have neither horns nor teeth, namely thus: Unless I am overcome and convicted with testimonies of the Holy Scriptures or with public, clear reasons and causes - for I do not believe either the pope or the councils alone, because it is evident in daylight and obvious that they have often erred and have been repugnant to themselves - and I am therefore convinced with the sayings that are attracted and introduced by me, and my conscience is caught in God's Word: then I cannot and will not recant, because it is neither safe nor advisable to do anything against conscience. Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise; God help me! Amen."

The very next day the Emperor gave an answer

to the effect that he now wished to deal with Luther as with an open heretic and hoped that every prince would do the same in his country. "He was ready to use all his powers to defend the Catholic religion, which had been handed down by his ancestors, emperors and kings, and now wanted to be overthrown by a wretched monk. On May 26 followed the formal declaration of eight written by the papal envoy Aleander. It stated, among other things, "that Luther was declared to be a separate member of the Church of God and a manifest heretic, and that he was to be respected and held as such by all and sundry. Consequently, no one should house, court, etch, water, or contain him, nor should anyone secretly or publicly assist or support him, but rather accept him in prison and send him to the Emperor's Majesty". Of those who would subject themselves to be Luther's followers, it was said: "Everyone shall cast them down and catch them and take their movable and immovable goods into his hands and turn and keep them for his own use. About Luther's books it was decreed: "No one shall buy them, sell them, read them, keep them, copy them, print them, or have them printed, etc., but shall burn them with fire and completely destroy them in all ways" - "all while avoiding the ban and the imperial watch and guard."

After this, it looked as if Luther and his cause were finished. But Luther's cause was God's cause. It happened to her according to what Luther said in Worms to the Elector of Trier: "If the counsel or the work is of men, it will perish. But if it is of God, you cannot restrain it," Apost. 5:38, 39. 5:38, 39. It is true that in the Declaration of Eight it was said that no one should "neither house,

court, cauterize, water, nor contain" Luther in avoiding the imperial power. But the Elector Frederick of Saxony obeyed God more than men. He had Luther secretly taken to Wartburg Castle near Eisenach to protect him from the dangers of the ban and the imperial power. Much less was the ban on buying, reading and distributing Luther's books respected. The New Testament, translated into German by Luther at the Wartburg, was so eagerly bought and read that, as the papist theologian Cochläus indignantly reported, even craftsmen and women gradually learned it by heart and dared to dispute with priests and others from the Scriptures. Other writings of Luther were also read most diligently. And because they contained God's living and powerful Word, they won hearts with divine power. The same Cochläus lamented to the German princes that Luther must be stopped by the authorities, otherwise he would soon bring all of Germany over to his side.

And Luther's writings were not only read in Germany. They were also translated and distributed in almost all countries of Europe. Soon in the Netherlands, England, Denmark, Sweden, Prussia, Poland, Hungary, even in Italy, France and Spain, there were larger or smaller numbers of Lutherans, public and secret followers of the teachings of the Word of God brought forth again by Luther. God's power was mightier than the emperor's command.

What was the attitude of the enemies? The edict of Worms never came to general execution. God has the princes and the peoples in his hands and can destroy the advice of the enemies of his word. After the Diet of Worms, the Emperor's hands were so tied by wars against the King of France and the Turks that

he could not concern himself with the execution of the Edict of Worms. Yes, the Emperor finally got into a war with the Pope himself, who had concluded an alliance with the King of France against the Emperor. The German papist princes, too, had many a grievance against the papacy and were not always willing to obey the pope's orders to intervene against the Lutheran "heretics".

But there can be no question of a cessation of the enmity between the woman seed and the serpent seed. Thus, the enmity of the pope's followers against the confessors of the Word of God could only be temporary and partially restrained. Even if some of the papist princes found fault with the pope, this was more a matter of external things. They were heartily devoted to the gospel of the free grace of God in Christ, as the natural, self-righteous man cannot be otherwise.

Some zealous papists also set about enforcing the Worms Edict immediately after the Diet in Worms. Duke George of Saxony had a bookseller who sold Luther's writings beheaded as early as 1521. Martyr's blood also flowed in the Netherlands, Hungary, Austria and Bavaria, Alsace, Cologne, etc. Luther speaks in this time of preachers and listeners in many places, who "make the number of the saints daily more and more, since some shed their blood, some are imprisoned, some are expelled from their own and all bear the shame of Christ". But the prison, the sword and the stake did not stop the gospel. It gained more and more ground. The papists saw this, and this increased their hostility. As early as 1524 some Papist estates had formed an alliance for the execution of the edict of Worms, so that, in order to be protected against

an impending attack, the Elector of Saxony, the Landgrave Philip of Hesse, and some imperial estates also formed an alliance, because "unfortunately publicly on the day" it said in the covenant formula, "how much and how often practices have been sought and taken, especially by the clergy and their followers in the holy empire, to suppress the holy, divine word again, to exterminate it and to tear it completely out of the hearts and consciences of men, if it were possible".

But the hatred of the papist princes and estates was most threatening at the Diet of Speier in 1529, when the papist party decreed that the Edict of Worms should be observed until a council. No one was to be allowed to convert to the Lutherans. Preachers were to preach in the spirit of the (papist) church. The Lutheran princes and estates rejected these impositions verbally and in writing. But they were finally denied a hearing. They were simply told to go along with the majority. Against this tyranny of conscience and screaming injustice, the Lutherans lodged a most solemn protest. At the end of this protest, submitted in writing on April 20, 1529, they said: "Thus they protest before God, who will search and judge all hearts, as well as before all men and creatures, that for themselves, their own, and for the sake of all men, they did not consent to all actions and supposed departures, which were undertaken and decided in reported or other matters against God, his holy word, the salvation of all their souls, and the good conscience of all of them, but considered everything to be null and void and unbinding.

This protestation, from which henceforth the followers of the

Gospel were also called Protestants *), aroused even more the wrath of the papist estates and especially also of the emperor. The emperor had just made peace with the king of France and had also settled with the pope. The Protestant envoys who presented the Speier protestation to the emperor at Piacenza in Italy in October 1529 were not only received harshly, but also treated as sings. The emperor's final decision was: "the protesters should be comfortable with the process once taken, because it must remain with the majority".

*) Our fathers were called Protestants because in matters concerning the soul and conscience they did not want to accept the word of man and the opinion of man, but only the word of God. Nowadays, mainly those who protest against the sole validity of God's Word in matters of faith, or who have already completely fallen away from the Christian faith, call themselves Protestants. These new Protestants have nothing in common with those true Protestants and confessors. If the word "Protestants" is used more often in the following, it is only used in the right and genuine sense.

This is how dangerous things were for the followers of the Gospel at the end of 1529. Especially the young and fiery Landgrave Philip of Hesse wanted them to protect themselves against this danger by a close alliance. Such an alliance was negotiated at several conventions. But Luther, repeatedly asked for his advice, absolutely refuted an alliance, as it was also directed against the emperor, the supreme temporal lord of them all. All negotiations, which the Lutheran princes and free cities conducted among themselves, were brought to a temporary standstill by the Emperor's letter, by which he summoned an Imperial Diet to Augsburg.

Second chapter. [^](#)

Preparation for the Imperial Diet and arrival in Augsburg.

In their protestation at Speier, the Lutheran estates had also asked for a "freely Christian common council" before which they wanted to answer for the cause of the Gospel. Such a council did not come about. The popes never loved free Christian councils, but only those of which they knew in advance that not God's word, but the papal statutes would have the rule. Thus even Charles V could by no means persuade Pope Clement VII to proclaim a general council. The pope had no confidence in a council at a time when the light of God's Word was already shining brightly in the lands and thousands upon thousands no longer reverently gazed upon him as the "holy father" under this illumination, but had recognized him as the man of sin and the child of perdition (2 Thess. 2).

Thus, on January 21, 1530, the emperor invited tenders for a Diet in Augsburg on April 8. This imperial announcement astonished the Lutheran estates to some extent. It was written in a very friendly tone. Concerning religion, the purpose of the Diet was to "hear, understand, and consider in love and kindness all the opinions, opinions, and opinions of every one, to bring them to one Christian truth and to compare them, to dismiss all that is not rightly interpreted or acted for both parts.

The Elector of Saxony received the imperial tender on March 11. Already on March 14, on the advice of his faithful and pious chancellor, Dr. Brück,

he gave his theologians at Wittenberg, Luther, Jonas, Bugenhagen and Melanchthon, the order to draw up in writing the main points concerning right doctrine and church customs, so that they would know what they had to assert at the Imperial Diet and how far they could enter into a settlement with a clear conscience. The theologians were to leave all other business, to occupy themselves only with the elaboration of the important writing and to hand it over to him personally in Torgau after eight days. Luther had already drafted seventeen articles with great precision and sharpness at the end of the previous year, the so-called Schwabach Articles. These were revised once more, enlarged with several additions in which the abuses going on in the Roman church were dealt with, and presented to the Elector at Torgau.

Thus, the Electorate of Saxony prepared itself for the responsibility of faith before the emperor and the empire. The theologians offered to appear before the emperor on their own behalf and to give an account, so that the elector would not be endangered because of them. The Elector replied: "May God be merciful that I should be excluded from your means! I will confess my Lord Christ with you.

Why were the theologians again talking about a danger that the Elector, as a confessor of the Gospel, might get into? After all, the imperial letter was quite friendly and gracious! The Protestant estates had reason enough not to trust the situation. The emperor had been staying with the pope in Italy for several months and was on friendly terms with him. In February, the emperor was also on his knees before the pope in order to be crowned Roman emperor. And before the coronation he had sworn: "I, Charles, Roman king and soon also

by God's grace emperor, promise and swear by God and St. Peter that in the future I will defend to the utmost of my ability the papal dignity and the Roman Church constantly, will not offend any freedom of the Church, but will preserve and protect the power, jurisdiction and rule of the same as much as is only possible." From the beginning, the Pope urged the Emperor to use the sword to lead the "heretics" in Germany back to obedience to the Roman Church. Neither council nor Diet, but fire and sword, were the means of establishing a satisfactory state of things in Germany. The emperor, however, did not want to use force for the time being. He was anxious to increase his ruling power through a unified Germany and to make it appear brilliant to the outside world. If he could secure the service of all the German princes, including the Protestant ones, without having to expend a great deal of strength in a war against them, this was much more agreeable to him. The emperor's first chancellor, Gattinara, a man grasped by the truth of the Gospel, also absolutely resisted the pope's urging to attack the Protestants without further ado. Yes, he dared. He dared to instruct His Holiness, the Pope, that the Church did not need both the force and the advice of pious and learned men. Nevertheless, it was agreed between the pope and the emperor before the latter's departure for Germany that if the Protestants could not be persuaded at the Diet to return to the pope's control, they would be forced to do so by the emperor, King Ferdinand and the other papist princes.

Word of these agreements between the emperor and the pope also reached Germany. The Elector received warnings from various quarters, even from the

courageous Landgrave Philip of Hesse, not to go personally to Augsburg. The Elector of Saxony, who was rightly regarded as the head of the Protestant princes, was threatened with the most danger. But the man already knew, by God's grace, a higher good than earthly dominion; so he would not be deterred from confessing his Lord Christ. He ordered that the people of the whole country be called upon to intercede for a happy outcome of the Diet; in Torgau he had a sermon preached on Matth. 10:32: "Whoever confesses me before men, him will I confess before my heavenly Father; but whoever denies me before men, him will I also deny before my heavenly Father" and confidently set out for Augsburg. His servants wore on the sleeves of their outer garments the letters inscribed: *V. D. M. I. Ae.*, the initial letters of the words: *Verbum Domini Manet In Aeternum*, which means: "The word of the Lord abides forever." On May 2, the Elector, as the first of all princes, held his entry to Augsburg. In his retinue were also Duke Ernst of Lüneburg, Prince Wolfgang of Anhalt and the Count of Mansfeld. On May 12, the Landgrave Philip of Hesse arrived. Thus the bawler Eck, who had already written triumphantly that "he knew for certain that no Lutheran would come to the preceding Diet, since they had already been tried and therefore lacked nothing but execution," was put to shame.

Third chapter. [^](#)

Confessing before the opening of the Reichstag.

The Reichstag was originally scheduled for April 8. A second letter from the emperor had postponed it to May 1. But it soon became apparent that several more weeks would pass before the emperor arrived. The emperor had only left Italy at the end of March, moved very slowly northward, and finally stopped for a long time at Innsbruck in Tyrol. Meanwhile, the Lutheran princes had their preachers busy preaching at Augsburg. There was a tremendous rush to these sermons. At the request of the citizens, one church after another was opened to Lutheran preachers. Dr. Erhard Schnepf, whom the Landgrave of Hesse had brought to Augsburg, even preached in the cathedral. A tremendous spiritual movement arose in Augsburg through these sermons. But the more the effect of the preached word of God became apparent, the higher rose the bitterness of the papist party. News of these events in Augsburg was given to the emperor. The fiercest opponents of the Reformation, Elector Joachim of Brandenburg, Duke George of Saxony, and Duke William of Bavaria, traveled to meet the emperor at Innsbruck. Melancthon wrote to Luther on May 11: "Duke Georg and Margrave Joachim have gone to the emperor; there they will take counsel from our necks." One sought to suspect the Elector of Saxony in particular also because of the sermons to the emperor. It was said that the Lutheran preachers had almost caused a riot in Augsburg. This was also in the plan of the Elector of Saxony. He obviously had dangerous intentions. The Emperor was offered 6,000 horsemen in order to be able to effectively

counter the plans of the Elector. These malicious slanders did not remain without effect on the emperor. From Innsbruck, the Emperor reproached the Elector for not having carried out the edict of Worms, and at the same time requested him to stop preaching. To the latter the Elector gave an answer which again testifies how serious he was about confessing the truth. He wrote to the emperor: "For the sake of his conscience, he must humbly beg for the omission of the sermons, since nothing but the bright truth of God and the Holy Scriptures is preached. In which case it would be terrible to put down God's Word and its truth. It would also cause great annoyance and would be considered as if His Imperial Majesty wanted to prohibit the teaching of the Gospel unheard of and unheard of, since such a Christian and highly thoughtful proclamation, as to how everything should be dealt with at this Imperial Diet for Christian settlement, had been sent out into all the world and Her Majesty would no doubt not like to be told that such a proclamation should not be followed." He also asked the emperor not to allow his malicious opponents so much hearing and influence.

Unfortunately, the latter took place more and more. After a few days, on June 4, the emperor's chancellor Gattinara died suddenly at Innsbruck. Gattinara, as was mentioned earlier, was well-disposed toward the Lutherans and had so far tried to counterbalance the evil influence of the Emperor's papist environment. He was already sickly in Italy, and they wanted to leave him there, noting that the harsh climate of Germany was not favorable to him. But he still insisted on going to Augsburg with the emperor. He did not want to expose his emperor to the evil influence of the violent party. An

intimate friend of Gattinara, Kornelius Scepper, told at Augsburg, "that Gattinara had once testified freely and publicly in the presence of many nobles that he wished and asked nothing more of God than that the Elector of Saxony and his kinsmen should persevere in the confession of the Gospel and continue to press for a Christian and free council still further and with all their might. For if they were to be deterred by threats and deceived by cunning and good words, and if the matter were not duly and lawfully settled in a council, he himself could not have a clear conscience as long as he lived, and would always be in doubt as to how to attain blessedness". Soon after Gattinara's death, the emperor departed from Innsbruck. The papal envoy Campegius went to Augsburg with significantly increased hopes. The Lutherans were poorer by one earthly support.

On June 15, towards evening, the emperor arrived at Augsburg. All the imperial estates went to meet him, and when they saw the emperor, they got off their horses and went to meet him on foot. The emperor and the high persons in his company also left the horses. Only the papal envoy and the cardinals of Salzburg and Trent remained seated on their mules. The emperor extended his hand to each imperial prince in greeting. When the welcoming ceremonies and speeches were over, the papal envoy Campegius stretched out his hands to give the papal "blessing". The emperor and the whole brilliant assembly sank on their knees in the dust to receive with due reverence the "blessing" of the "holy father". Only seven princes remained standing tall: the Elector of Saxony, his son, the Elector Prince, the Margrave of Brandenburg, Ernst and Francis of Lüneburg, Philip of Hesse, and Wolfgang

Von Anhalt. These were the Lutheran princes. They gave the first test of their confessional courage here immediately on the emperor's arrival. They could not have a papal "blessing" pronounced without denial of the recognized truth. Campegius' anger against the Lutheran princes, however, had increased by several degrees.

But one more battle was in store for the confessors for that day. When all the reception ceremonies were over and the princes departed, the emperor ordered the Protestant princes to stay behind and told them that they should finally stop preaching and attend the Corpus Christi procession on the following day. On the following day the princes quite rightly said that the emperor had been induced to this demand by their papist adversaries. For one thing, no Corpus Christi procession had been held in Augsburg for years, and secondly, at the meetings of the princes it was always left to the discretion of the individual whether and in which religious festivities they wished to participate. One was at first somewhat concerned about these demands of the emperor. The Landgrave of Hesse took the floor and asked the emperor to desist from his demand to refrain from preaching. With them nothing but the pure Word of God, as St. Augustine had also interpreted it, would be proclaimed. The emperor, his face reddening with anger, declared that he must insist on his demand. Then it was the old Margrave George of Brandenburg who came before the emperor and exclaimed: "Before I should deny God and his holy gospel and should agree to a false, erroneous opinion, I would rather kneel down immediately at this place before your majesty and have my head cut off". The emperor was astonished and also probably somewhat confused by this holy seriousness. He fell out of the part he had to play

for the papists, and replied kindly in his Dutch dialect: "Löwer Fürst, nit Kopp ab! nit Kopp ab!" The Lutheran princes were to have time to think it over until the next day, and to communicate their resolution the next morning.

The next morning, when the procession was to be held, the princes talked as in the evening before. The Margrave of Brandenburg explained in detail, on behalf of the others, why they could not participate in the Corpus Christi procession. "Because the imperial command had the appearance that they were to approve and confirm the procession as an act of worship by their presence, whereas Christ had commanded nothing of the kind and nothing of the kind could be found in the entire Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, it was also purely impossible for them to comply with such demands with a clear conscience. Not only would they be acting in a most reckless, audacious, and unholy manner if they wanted to prefer such things, which are merely instituted by men, to divine rights and commands, but their opponents would also, in so far as they approved and, as it were, justified the theatrical procession and transfer of the body of Christ with their presence, regardless of the fact that it is obviously and directly contrary to the clear word of God, as well as to the public teaching of their church and the usual ceremonies of the same, they would certainly interpret their concession as if they had overturned and revoked by their own example and deed what had hitherto been taught in their countries by the Holy Scriptures." Finally, the Margrave added for his person that he promised and vowed to continue to prove in all worldly matters the loyalty that had been proven up to now and to devote life and limb to the Emperor, but "in these high matters concerning God

himself, he was forced by God's unchangeable command to set aside and disregard all human decree, because it was written that one must obey God more than men. For this reason, he firmly resolved that he would spare no danger, nor even death itself, over the confession of the doctrine which he was assured was the voice of the Son of God and the immovable and eternal truth, having heard that such a thing should befall all who meant to persevere in the true religion".

The emperor realized that there was nothing to be done with orders. He only expressed the hope that the Lutheran princes would nevertheless not withdraw from the procession. The hope, which was hardly expressed with great confidence, did not come true. Rather, what Spalatin reported happened: "Our princes went home and let the emperor hold the procession with other electors and princes. The Emperor's Majesty carried a burning light like the others, went bareheaded, and kept the whole procession going until one o'clock."

With regard to preaching, negotiations continued on June 17 and 18. The Lutheran princes presented to the emperor how unseemly it was that they, who preached the "holy gospel pure and clear and as it had been taught by the most proven fathers," should be silent with preaching, while the opposing party was allowed to speak freely, who had introduced many doctrines and customs contrary to the Holy Scriptures and the most proven fathers, so "that even the whole world and all pious people before that time had already cried out miserably about it. They further claimed that the prohibition of preaching was tantamount to condemning their cause before the interrogation, and that they needed their sermons as nourishment for their souls. Finally, a kind of

Settlement reached. Both parts, including the papist preachers, were to be prohibited from preaching. The emperor himself was to appoint some preachers, who, however, were only to read the text of the gospel without interpretation. As one who was not allowed to preach, Dr. Faber was named in particular, who was known for his violent vituperations against the Lutherans.

"Now this," remarks a historian, "was the first courageous resistance which the Protestant princes had to make to the impositions of their opponents at this Imperial Diet. They showed a steadfastness which would have been inexplicable, or at least unwise, in view of their external incapacity and their small numbers, if trust in God and conviction of the rightfulness of their cause had not strengthened their courage. But they had also received the first proof on this occasion how little they were likely to rely on the mild expressions of the imperial proclamation."

Fourth chapter. [^](#)

Adoption of the Confession.

When the Elector of Saxony departed from Torgau on April 3, the theologians Luther, Melanchthon, Jonas, Spalatin and Agricola of Eisleben were in his entourage. Luther, however, did not go to Augsburg at the request of the Elector. He was still under the spell of the pope and the emperor. So the Elector did not think it advisable to bring him to the Diet. He would have been exposed to the fate of Hus, and the emperor would have been turned against the cause of the confessors from the outset. Thus, when the Elector set out from Koburg for Augsburg on April 23,

he left Luther in good custody at Ehrenburg Fortress near Koburg. Koburg was the southernmost border town of the Electorate of Saxony. They wanted Luther as close as possible to be able to consult him in all difficult questions.

The Elector had been advised to submit a short, unified report to the Emperor on the current religious disputes. Melanchthon was commissioned to write this report on the basis of the documents presented to the Elector at Torgau. Melanchthon already set to work at Koburg, and at Augsburg he still had enough time, since the emperor's arrival was still delayed by almost two months. Thus Melanchthon became the author of the Augsburg Confession. On May 11, the Elector sent Melanchthon's work by special messenger to Luther for examination and review. The elector's accompanying letter thus read: "Our greetings beforehand. Venerable and reverend, dear devotee. After you and other our scholars at Wittenberg have, at our gracious request, brought the articles that are disputed on account of religion into a list, we do not want to conceal from you that Magister Philippus Melanchthon has now overlooked them and drawn them into a form, which we are sending you herewith. And it is our gracious request that you be at liberty to survey and move the same articles further. And if you find it so convenient, or if you think you should add something to it, then you should record it next to it, so that we may then be prepared and sent for the arrival of the Emperor's Majesty, which we will shortly be providing for ourselves, and so that we may then immediately send the same again to this messenger, well guarded and kept safe," to which Luther replied: "Grace and peace in Christ, our Lord. Most Serene, Highborn Prince,

most gracious Lord! I have read Magister Philippsen's Apologia *) over; it pleases me almost [very] well, and I know nothing to improve or change it, nor would it be suitable, for I cannot tread so softly and quietly. May Christ, our Lord, help it to bear much and great fruit, as we hope and pray. Amen." Melanchthon continued to work on the Confession, now also under the advice of Brenz and Regius and other theologians who had gradually arrived in Augsburg. Luther was continually informed of the changes and additions.

*) That is, defensive writing. This is what the Augsburg Confession was called at that time.

The Confession was initially drafted only in the name and on behalf of the Elector of Saxony. But at the instigation of Margrave George of Brandenburg, the other Lutheran estates decided to make the Confession drafted by Melanchthon for Electoral Saxony their own as well. In joint conferences, the individual articles of the Confession were once again discussed and debated. Melanchthon refers to this when he writes with regard to the Augsburg Confession: "I have done nothing for myself. In the presence of the princes, other heads and the preachers, the individual sentences have been discussed in turn."

The confession consists of 28 articles. The first 21 set forth the pure doctrine of the Word of God, the last 7 deal with the papist abuses which the Lutherans had abolished as being contrary to the Word of God!). Of the 21 actual doctrinal articles, again the first 17 form a certain whole, which includes the whole doctrine according to the main points. The last 4: "On Free Will", "On the Cause of Sins", "On Faith and Good Works", "On the Ministry of the

Saints", form more of an appendix and are still especially directed against papist slander. The preface and conclusion of the Confession are written in the usual diplomatic style of the time by the Chancellor of Electoral Saxony, Dr. Brück.

Fifth Chapter. [^](#)

Beginn des Reichstags und Weigerung des Kaisers, to have the confession of the Lutherans read out.

On June 20, a Monday, the Reichstag, the outcome of which all Germany looked forward to with the most eager anticipation, was opened. A solemn mass was first held in the cathedral. The mass was followed by a speech of the papal nuncio Pimpinelli, in which he attacked the Lutherans in the most impudent way. He said that the Germans were worse than the Turks. The latter obeyed a master; in Germany, however, there were people who did not want to obey anyone. The Turks held on to their old faith, but many Germans wanted to be smarter than their ancestors. Pimpinelli did not say this in reference to the abominable papal economy in Germany, nor merely in reference to the peasant revolt and the ravings of the Anabaptists, but these omissions were aimed at the Lutheran classes, who were present in the church without participating in the "service". Everyone felt the same. Even some Papist princes, and especially the Elector of Mainz, were displeased with this crude and impudent attack on the Lutherans. That the papal nuncio dared to make such statements, however, clearly showed which spirit wanted to rule at the Imperial Diet.

After the fair, the first Reichstag meeting was held from the town hall. Two main issues were to be discussed at the opened Diet. One was to discuss and decide how to continue the war against the Turks. Secondly, the divisions in religion were to be brought to an end. As far as the latter was concerned, the emperor said that religious matters should be treated with love and friendliness; but in the same speech the emperor not only complained that the edict of Worms had not been carried out everywhere, but also made the untrue assertion that all the imperial estates had consented to the edict of Worms, and that its non-execution had been the cause of the Peasants' War and the revolt of the Anabaptists. The Lutheran estates were again not mentioned by name, but they - that was clear - should feel primarily hit.

That same evening, the Elector of Saxony summoned his co-religionists and exhorted them to Christian steadfastness. On the following day, Tuesday morning, he ordered everyone to leave, locked himself in his chamber and prayed hotly and long. He also held the main points of the doctrine to be confessed against God's Word once again, in order to be quite courageous in confession through the living insight into the agreement of the same with the Holy Scriptures. He not only wanted the theologians to give an account of the true faith, but he also wanted to confess his Lord Christ with all his heart.

It was agreed that the religious matter should be dealt with first in the sessions of the Reichstag. The Emperor determined that on June 24 the Lutheran Estates should submit in writing what they wished to advance.

So on June 23 (Thursday) the Lutheran Estates assembled before the Elector of Saxony. The confession was read again and then signed by all. When Prince Wolfgang of Anhalt put the pen to the signature, he spoke to the bystanders: "I have done many a beautiful ride for the benefit of others, why should I not, if necessary, also saddle my horse in honor and obedience to my Lord and Savior JESU Christo and hurry with the presentation of my body and life to the eternal crown of honor in heavenly life?"

With hearts firm and eager to confess by God's grace, the Lutheran princes went to the imperial assembly the following day, Friday afternoon. They wanted to confess, but - they did not want to let them confess. The opponents feared this public confession. Campegius and the papal theologians knew quite well that some in the imperial assembly were only opponents of the Lutherans because they had been told the most horrible things about them. The imperial secretary Valdes had explained to Melanchthon only a few days before that "the Spaniards knew no other than that the Lutherans were teaching annoying and ungodly things about the Holy Trinity, about Christ and about the Holy Mother of God; they therefore believed that they were doing God a greater service if they strangled a Lutheran than if they struck a Turk dead. In Germany, too, through the efforts of the papist clergy, the crudest lies about the Lutherans were still in circulation, especially at the courts of the princes. It was foreseen that this tissue of lies would be torn when the Lutherans were given the opportunity to make a public confession of their doctrine. If one reads the rather detailed reports from that time, especially about this imperial assembly, 'one comes to the

conviction: the emperor, influenced especially by the papal legate and his brother, King Ferdinand, wanted to completely prevent a public reading of the Lutheran confession. The insolent Eck still scolded two years later that the Protestants had been allowed to read out their confession before emperor and empire.

First, the papal legate appeared that afternoon and gave a long speech. Of course, it was not without biting remarks about the Lutherans. He lamented that the little ship of Peter (he meant the church of the pope) had never been in such great danger as right now. Some wicked and perverse people had brought it to this point. This caused the "holy father" great grief. After this speech was answered by the Elector of Mainz, the Lutheran estates met to bring their confession before the Diet. But the emperor wanted Austrian envoys, who were asking for help against the Turks, to be admitted first. The presentation of the long and well-known complaints took a long time. Finally the envoys departed. The Lutheran estates rose again and asked through Dr. Brück to be allowed to read out their confession now. But the emperor replied that it was already too late to read out the confession. They would only hand over the confession to him, and he would then reconsider it. It was easy to see that if they gave in to the emperor's request, the public reading would never take place. Thus the confessors, through Dr. Brück, continued, stating that "they would be carried out by their detractors on account of the faith and what was pending before Her Majesty, as well as others within and outside the empire, as if they had such articles, which were against God and His holy

gospel, preached in their lands and territories. In order that His Majesty and all men present may hear that such an imposition is done to them for vain innocence, their high and unavoidable need requires that they again humbly and for God's sake request His Majesty to hear such articles. But the emperor again refused to allow the reading of the confession. For the third time the Lutheran estates asked to be heard. "Since these were matters that affected the souls and oaths of the Elector and the other princes, their most imploring requests and petitions were once again made to Your Majesty, and Your Majesty, for God's sake, would graciously hear them." Finally the emperor agreed to let the reading of the confession take place on the following day, but not in the hall of the town hall, where the meetings were usually held, but in the much smaller chapel room of the bishop's palace.

Chapter Six.

Handing over of the confession.

On June 25, a Saturday, in the afternoon at 3 o'clock, all the princes and estates gathered in the imperial inn in the episcopal palace to hear the confession of the Lutherans. The chapel room intended for the lecture could hold about 200 people. Many more had crowded in. By order of the emperor, however, all those who were not members of the imperial assembly had to leave. The Elector of Saxony declared that he and his co-religionists were ready to make their confession. At the same time the other Lutheran princes rose. They had previously agreed to stand during the reading of their

confession. The emperor, however, demanded that they sit down again.

The two Chancellors of Electoral Saxony, Dr. Brück and Dr. Beyer, then stepped into the middle of the hall, Dr. Brück holding the Latin copy and Dr. Beyer the German copy. The latter was intended to be read aloud. But there was another attempt to soften the effect of the dreaded confession. The emperor, again influenced by the never-quiet papist opponents, demanded that the Latin copy be read aloud. Many of those present were not so well versed in Latin that they could have understood everything that was read. But the Elector of Saxony modestly objected to the Emperor's demand. He said that "they were from German soil, so he hoped that Her Majesty would also allow the German tongue. The emperor gave in. And now Dr. Beyer began to read out the confession in a loud, measured voice, so that it took him almost two hours. The purpose of the papists to let the confession come before as few ears as possible during his lecture was not quite achieved. For thousands stood in the courtyard under the open windows and could understand almost every word that was read. Silent reigned not only in the hall, but also in the trousers.

After the reading was finished, the emperor had his spokesman, Count Palatine Frederick, declare that he had "graciously heard" the confession. "Because this was an excellent, highly important, and considerably large deal, and therefore well worthy of consideration," he wanted to give the matter further thought and, when he had come to a decision, to communicate it to the Protestants. The latter thanked the Emperor together with the Estates for a kind hearing and asked

once again for serious consideration of their confession, Dr. Brück wanted to hand over both copies of the confession, the Latin and the German, to the Imperial Secretary Alexander Schweiß. The emperor, however, reached out and received both copies himself. He gave the German one to the Elector of Mainz for safekeeping in the Imperial Archives, and kept the Latin one for himself. After the emperor had expressed the wish that the confession read out should not be printed without his will, he cancelled the session of the Imperial Diet. Emperor Charles V closed many sessions of the Diet during his long and stormy reign. But on June 25, between 6 and 7 o'clock in the evening, he closed the one which the Lutheran Church will remember until Judgment Day. "That was a day," wrote Spalatin, "on which one of the greatest works that ever happened on earth took place; a day on which a confession in Latin and German, written with divine Scripture at the bottom and with such glimpses, was read out, the like of which had not been seen in a thousand years, indeed while the world stood." Luther rejoiced: "I am only glad to live in a time when Christ has been publicly proclaimed by such dear confessors in such a respectable assembly and through this glorious confession, and the saying has come true: 'I speak of thy testimonies before kings.'"

Chapter Seven. [^](#)

Impression of the Augsburg Confession.

The impression that the read confession made on most of those present was powerful. The known divine truth proved its mighty power on the hearts, even if, unfortunately, in many cases only temporarily due to the guilt of the resisting evil will.

We have already mentioned that not all enemies of the Protestants were malicious. The papist clergy had described the Lutherans as people who overthrew the whole Christian faith and were worse than the Turks and Mamelukes. One was all the more astonished when one heard a completely different confession.

Thus, at first, most of those present listened with the greatest attention to the reading of the Confession. Spalatin reports: "Imperial Majesty and King Fernandus, the Dukes of Bavaria, and also several bishops listened very diligently". A message that claims the opposite with regard to the Emperor is not sufficiently authenticated. Duke Wilhelm of Bavaria, who was otherwise loyal to the pope, addressed the Elector of Saxony in a very friendly manner after the conclusion of the meeting and openly stated that he had not been told about this matter and doctrine before. He expressed the same against Dr. Eck with the remark that one would be able to refute this doctrine. When Dr. Eck replied that "he dared to refute the Lutheran doctrine with the Fathers, but not with the Scriptures," the Duke turned away unwillingly and exclaimed: "So I hear, the Lutherans sit in the Scriptures and we Pontificii [followers of the Pope] beside them!" Bishop Stadion of Augsburg exclaimed: "What has been said is true, it is the truth, we cannot deny it!" Even the Archbishop of Salzburg could not deny his consent to a part of the confession. Only that he found annoying and intolerable "that a wretched monk should want to reform them all and make them restless." Duke Heinrich von Braunschweig, one of the fiercest opponents of the Reformation among the princes, invited Melancthon to the table soon after the meeting

and confessed to him that "he could not object to the articles on both kinds of supper, on the marriage of priests, and on the dietary statutes".

If the confession of the truth had already made a powerful impression on the enemies, how much more must this have been the case with those who had already partially gone astray from the papist doctrine and had come out of the Diet with a heart bearing the truth! Some of them fell for the truth immediately, others not long after. While the Diet was still in session, the representatives of the imperial cities of Heilbronn, Kempten, Windsheim, Weißenburg and Frankfurt am Main formally and publicly joined the confession. The Dukes Erich of Brunswick and Barnim of Pomerania, as well as the Counts Georg Ernst of Henneberg and Wilhelm of Nassau, also received the initial impetus for their later conversion to the Reformation by hearing the Confession read out publicly on June 25, 1530.

Luther therefore rightly wrote from Koburg in response to the Elector's complaint that Lutheran preachers were forbidden to preach during the Imperial Diet: "The adversaries think they have almost succeeded in having preaching forbidden by imperial decree. The opponents think that they have almost succeeded in having preaching forbidden by imperial decree, but they do not see, the wretched people, that through the written confession, more has been preached than perhaps ten preachers would otherwise have done. Is it not a fine wisdom and great wit that Magister Eisleben and others must keep silent, but instead the Elector of Saxony and other princes and lords come out with the written confession and preach freely before the Imperial Majesty and the whole empire under their noses, so that they must hear it and cannot speak anything against it?

I mean, the prohibition of the sermons is well smelled with it. They do not want to let their servants listen to the preachers, but they themselves have to listen to the "Wohl Ärgeres" (as they call it) from great lords and fall silent. Christ is not silent at the Diet; and if they were mad, they would have to hear more from the confession than they would have heard from the preachers in a year. So it goes, that St. Paul says: God's word wants to be unbound. If it is forbidden in the pulpit, it must be heard in the palaces. If poor preachers must not speak it, then great princes and lords speak it; and summa, when all is silent, then the stones will cry out, says Christ himself."

The pope Cochlaeus later complained that the Augsburg Confession had caused many princes and cities of the empire to fall away from the pope. And what about Emperor Charles himself? Did not the Confession, to which he so eagerly reached out his hand, perhaps put a thorn in his heart that he could not entirely get rid of? He was a politician through and through, and never showed himself favorable to the Reformation. But it is more than likely that in the last hours of his life the evangelical truth became powerful to him and he died believing in the Lutheran doctrine of justification. Bartholomew Carranza, Archbishop of Toledo, who assisted the emperor on his deathbed, was imprisoned as a heretic by order of the papal inquisitors. The same happened to the emperor's former confessor Constantine de la Fuente. King Ferdinand also later became much milder against the Lutherans. Indeed, he had Prince Maximilian educated mostly among Lutherans, so that the Pope reproached him bitterly in 1569.

Chapter Eight. [^](#)

The papist so-called confutation.

On June 25, as we have seen, the glorious confession of our fathers had been read. The papist estates now held a council on how to further deal with the Lutherans. Actually, the papist estates should now also have presented a confession of their faith. In the imperial letter it had been said that "every estate's discretion, opinion and opinion" should be heard. The Protestants, too, had earlier - and now again in the preface to the Confession - expressed the expectation that "the other [papist] electors, princes, and estates will now also do the same, in Latin and German, by submitting their opinions in writing. But the papist theologians declared that the delivery of a confession from their side was unnecessary, "because they stuck to the old doctrine". And that was quite wise. For one thing, even if the "infallible" pope had been in place, it would have been difficult to compile a confession out of the tangle of human opinions circulating in the papal church. Then such a confession would not have been able to bear being placed in the light of the Word of God. Finally, the papists wanted to play the judges in this whole business; the Lutherans, together with the Word of God, were to take the position of the defendants.

But what to do now? The papist theologians, among them especially Eck, returned to their old advice that one should no longer engage in disputations with heretics already condemned by the pope. The best thing, they said, was to take up the sword. "One must let go of the

vain words and cut off the lazy limbs with the imperial sword." The Archbishop of Salzburg thus let himself be heard saying, "Either we must have them, or they have us; which of the two comes to us?" One prince scoffed at the Lutherans' confession written in black ink and said, "If we were emperor, we would add the red rubrics." Another, who belonged to the more mild-mannered, interrupted him: "Lord, I hope the red doesn't splash under your eyes! The emperor and a part of the papist princes did not yet want to use force. Partly they did not yet consider the use of force advisable, partly their consciences were also seized by the right of the Protestant cause. Thus it was decided to submit the Protestants' confession to a number of papist theologians for examination and refutation. Among these theologians were the fiercest enemies of Luther: Eck, Faber, Cochläus, Wimpina and others. With great zeal they set about the "refutation" (confutation). As early as July 12, it was believed to be finished and to be able to present the work to the papist estates. The work was extensive enough, but it turned out badly. Very little had been said about the confession of the Protestants; on the other hand, the most scurrilous invective against Luther had been used all the more. On July 15, the emperor and a part of the papist estates decisively rejected this work as far too prolix, superficial and vehement. The "refutation" should be more modest and thorough. Spalatin reported: "For the first time, [the "Refutation"] consisted of 280 sheets. Luther aptly writes of this work of the opponents: "Evil carpenters make much shavings and spoil much good

wood, as godless scribes stain much good paper." Naturally, the papist theologians were not very edified by the reception of their "Refutation" by their own people. After all, they had had to hear scolding words from them themselves. It is quite understandable if Eck said at that time that the emperor himself was to blame for the fact that there was so much trouble and complaint with the Lutherans. If the emperor had followed the pope and "when he entered Germany, attacked the Lutherans with the sword quickly and freshly, beheading them one by one, the matter would have been well advised.

Finally, on August 3, also in the opinion of the emperor, the "refutation" had gained such a shape that it was believed to be able to be read out publicly. The reading was done by the imperial secretary Sweat in front of all the imperial estates at the same place where 38 days ago the Protestants had read out their confession, in the chapel of the bishop's apartment.

What impression did this confutation make on the Protestants? Melancthon wrote about it on August 6 to Luther: "Faber has never written such a ludicrous and clumsy book that the reported confutation should not be even more ludicrous and clumsy". The Spanish abbot Goncalo de Illes-cas wrote that the Protestants laughed at and mocked the confutation when it was read out. In any case, they did not laugh and mock, but they had trouble remaining serious about the scriptural proofs with which the papist theologians wanted to support their papal doctrines. Thus they had cited 1 Sam. 2,36 as proof that only the bread and not also the cup should be given to the laity in the Lord's Supper. Here it is said of the descendants of Eli that after they had lost the priesthood they should beg for a piece of bread. From this the masters of the

Confutation had concluded: thus the laity must also be satisfied with the bread alone in the sacrament. Melanchthon writes further in the letter to Luther just mentioned: "The imperial speech *) was indeed hard and dreadful enough; but because the confutation sounded so childish and trivial, nevertheless, after the end of the reading, one testified to a great pleasure in the matter . . . All the righteous and prudent seem to be more confident and courageous after hearing how childishly and ludicrously the confutation is written."

*) Melanchthon means the speech that the emperor sent before the reading of the confutation.

Even some of the papist princes must not have looked at the reading of the Confutation with joy and confidence. Melanchthon reported to Luther: "The adversaries, who possess reason, must have felt great indignation that such lappishness was imposed on the emperor's majesty. Thus, the impression that the confession of the Lutherans had made was by no means completely erased among all opponents. This was especially evident a few days later at a meeting at which some of the papist estates were present. Bishop Stadion of Augsburg opened this meeting with a speech in which he said, among other things: "It is most necessary that in this matter all possible diligence, care and caution be exercised, so that nothing be done or decided that would be contrary to Holy Scripture or otherwise contrary to right and equity. For it is all too true and evident to everyone that the confessors of Luther's teaching have not challenged or sought to violate a single article of faith. In such a state of affairs, however, all Christian-minded

people are obliged and bound to think with all diligence about sufficient means and ways how the peace and unity in the church can be restored, confirmed and preserved." The Bishop of Salzburg, Matthias Lang, interrupted him vehemently with the words: "Where does this so quick change and quite unexpected sanctity come from, your dear? The Bishop of Augsburg replied: "I do not deny that I have committed many evil and punishable acts in my life; but the present time and opportunity urge me to renounce all wickedness, to give up the harmful lusts of the flesh, and to begin another life. And that I do not refrain, perhaps your beloved's life is not much more pious and better than mine. But your loved ones' intentions are so much worse and more terrible than mine, because they try to excuse their vices with greater obstinacy, to cover up idolatrous abuses, and to defend and preserve ungodly doctrine. God forbid that I should be guilty of such ungodliness!" Then the Elector Joachim of Brandenburg started up and shouted loudly that the Lutherans had overturned articles of faith. The Bishop of Augsburg wanted these articles named. Joachim of Brandenburg answered: "The Lutherans have completely rejected and overturned the doctrine of the Catholic Church and the invocation of the saints. But the bishop was not misled. He replied, "The invocation of the saints is not an article of faith, and the Catholic or Christian Church is by no means contested by the Lutherans, but only the abuses, of which there are so many, so gross, and so dangerous in the Roman Church, that no one can deny them." On

the afternoon of the same day these appearances were repeated among the popes, indeed they clashed so much that it almost came to assault.

It is therefore all the more surprising that the emperor declared that he agreed with the confutation that had been read out; that it had refuted the Protestants' confession, and that he confidently hoped that the latter would now return to the old religion. This clearly proves how little the emperor understood spiritual matters and how completely he was in the hands of the fanatical papist party.

The Lutheran estates first asked for a copy of the confutation. This was refused to them with the remark that the religious matter had now been sufficiently considered and was ready to be dismissed. Even in refusing the copy, the emperor acted entirely according to the wishes of the papal legate Campegius. Campegius had already advised that "under the present circumstances he could not see it good that this new doctrine [as he called the confession of the Lutherans] should be closely examined, because heated, astute and restless minds [as he called the learned confessors of the truth who were inflamed with holy zeal] would never lack the means to make their new opinions very probable. ... He thought it best that a written refutation of the Protestant denomination be prepared and publicly read out, in order to suppress the favorable prejudices with which some were taken for it. But copies of this refutation should not be communicated to anyone, lest they give occasion for new quarrels". The papist theologians felt that they were no match for the Lutherans. The Jesuit Masenius himself confesses that the refusal of the papists to furnish a copy of their confutation to the Protestants

gave the impression that they did not trust their cause. And he adds: "It is certain that the Protestants brought much more experienced men to the dispute in their cause than the Catholics, so that it was just as dangerous to take up the disputation as to reject it. The latter attacked their opponents, who often did not know where they would be attacked, with the Holy Scriptures alone; the latter wandered about in the interpreters of the Scriptures, in the writings of the Fathers, and the decisions of the councils, as in a wide field."

When the Lutheran Estates continued to ask for a copy of the Confutation, the Emperor informed them on August 6 that a copy would be handed over to them if they would first promise on oath not to write or submit anything against it, nor to publish it in print. Under these conditions, a copy could be of no use to the Protestants; so they also refrained from handing it over. The Emperor's request that they "keep the same and unanimous position" with the confutation they had heard was, of course, decisively rejected by them.

Chapter Nine. [^](#)

The Augsburg Confession in Danger and Saved from Danger.

When the Lutheran estates had so decisively refused to unite with the papists on the basis of the confutation, their situation seemed very dangerous. The emperor, as Melanchthon reported to Luther, was very upset. The zealous papist party now expected that the emperor would finally resort to violent measures. The Landgrave Philip of Hesse left Augsburg secretly on August 6. Partly he had

become impatient with the course of the previous actions, and partly he feared an attack against his person. But once again the more peaceful-minded party among the opponents gained the upper hand. New negotiations were opened for a peaceful settlement. Three committees were appointed one after the other. The negotiations of the first committee soon proved unsuccessful. On the opposing side, the fanatical Elector of Brandenburg took the floor. He usually concluded his speeches with threats. He angrily shouted to the Elector of Saxony: "If the Elector John of Saxony does not leave the accepted Lutheran doctrine again, then it will happen that the imperial majesty will not only attack him with an armed hand and deprive him of all dignities, land and people, even deprive him of life, but will also make all his subjects, with wives and children, submissive to him. Such threats did not harm the cause of the confession. The Lutheran princes simply replied that in order to keep a good conscience, in order not to lose soul and blessedness, they would have to put body and life, property and dominion on the line.

Soon, however, because the poltergeists of the Elector of Brandenburg hardly permitted negotiations, a second, narrower committee was appointed. "Several persons from both sides who were sympathetic to the matter and inclined to peace" were to conduct the negotiations with a view to reaching a settlement. This narrower committee consisted of 14 persons. The papist theologians were Eck, Wimpina and Cochläus; the Lutheran ones were Melancthon, Schnepf and Brenz. Negotiations took place from August 16 to 21.

This was the most dangerous time for our Augsburg Confession. An eighteenth-century historian says: "Never

did the hope of peace between the Protestants and the Roman Church seem so near its fulfillment as long as this second committee continued its negotiations. And never would a peace have entailed such harmful consequences for the Protestants as this one did, if it had come about. If the government of a higher hand is not recognized here, it will remain inexplicable that a better use was not made of the yieldingness of the Protestants at that time." Who then became too yielding? Not the Protestant princes and estates. Melanchthon became yielding and weak, and he, the leader of the Lutheran theologians at Augsburg, by his temporary weakness and despondency also made other scholars of God temporarily weak and despondent.

Therefore, do not despise Melanchthon! Let us consider how the evil enemy shot all fiery arrows at him at that time. After all, it was a matter of establishing and maintaining a confession that was to be a banner of truth for the church until the Last Day and was to cause great harm to the kingdom of Satan. Through this confession a bright light was given for the knowledge that saves from the kingdom of darkness. So how will the prince of darkness have challenged the servants of God, who wanted to spoil his game, at Augsburg with doubts and pusillanimity! How he will have especially assailed Melanchthon, who was by nature fearful! Melanchthon saw the emperor, the pope and the most powerful German princes allied, if necessary by force of arms, to make the lands of the Protestants subservient to him and to bring them back under the tyranny of the pope by driving out all preachers of the gospel. Then the descendants of the Gospel would also be completely deprived of fine. All this misery Melanchthon saw in the offing, if one could not now compare oneself with the

opposite party. Thus the spirit of anxiousness and despondency came over him. And this had the consequence that he at times yielded more in the negotiations now begun than could be done without prejudice to the truth. Soon all the doctrinal articles of the Augsburg Confession were almost completely agreed upon, but only in terms, not in substance. Melanchthon put up with such expressions, behind which the opponents could hide their false doctrine. The opponents did not think of letting go of their false teachings. Already on July 6 it had been decided in Rome that they would not give in to anything and would not agree to anything. And the papist theologians had also said it openly; they entered into negotiations only in the hope that the Lutherans would give way.

Melanchthon was not sufficiently wary of these scheming, dishonest opponents. Luther was right when he reproached the theologians at Augsburg that the disguised friendliness of the papists was more to be feared than their raging and threatening. Even the article by which the church stands and falls, the article of the justification of the sinner by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith alone, was in danger. How? We can best see this from a letter of Melanchthon to Luther. Melanchthon wrote under August 22: "As far as doctrine is concerned, it is thus: Eck challenges the word *sola* [alone] when we say that man is justified by faith alone. Yet he did not condemn the doctrine in itself, but said that the unlearned were vexed. For I compelled him to confess that righteousness is rightly imputed to faith. Nevertheless, he requested that we write that a person is justified by grace and faith. This I have not disputed. But

the fool does not understand the word grace." Thus far Melanchthon to Luther. But there the dear Melanchthon should have "Widerfechten." It is in itself quite rightly said that man is justified "by grace and faith. God, out of His own grace and mercy, imputes Christ's righteousness to the one who believes in Christ. But the fool Eck, as Melanchthon himself notes, did not understand the word grace in this trade. Under the word grace, he also meant the good works wrought in man by God's grace. Thus, he basically wanted justification by faith and the works of man. That is why he challenged the word sola. And it was hypocrisy if he privately wanted to admit that it was right to say that man is justified by faith alone. Luther therefore also answered Melanchthon: "You write how Eck is forced by you to confess that we are justified by faith alone. But would to God that you had forced him so that he would no longer have to lie!"

Even with regard to the so-called abuses, the papists only apparently gave in. This was not possible in any other way. These abuses had their reason in false doctrine. And to maintain these abuses, that was the main goal of the papists. For example, how could the Papal Church exist without the Mass? An old theologian wrote: "The mass is the drawbar of the whole chariot; if it is broken, the chariot will not move. . . . The loss of the Mass, as a great comet in the papist sky, would have brought with it a great tail of lost and darkened articles of faith". That is why the papal envoy had already said on June 26:

*) About the papist mass, see the 24th article of the Augsburg Confession.

"The abuses of which the Protestants complain cannot be abolished, because these improvements would do more harm to the Church than the evil itself" Yes he expressed that he would rather be torn to pieces than give out the Mass.

Nevertheless, Melanchthon, out of fear, temporarily allowed himself to be involved in the wonderful work of uniting the Pope with Luther and Christ with Belial, as Luther put it.

But God wanted to give and maintain a pure, unadulterated confession to His church at that time. Thus, even these negotiations eventually had to break down. The papists, for example, stubbornly insisted that the Lutherans should not teach the distribution of Holy Communion under both forms as a divine commandment. This was too strong for Melanchthon. It had to be reported on August 22 that the committee had not been able to come to an agreement. An even closer committee, in which only Eck and Melanchthon negotiated as theologians, was also unsuccessful. Melanchthon became strong again by God's grace. Luther had written the most powerful letters to him to strengthen his faith and to take the fear of the impending dangers from his heart. Even a Venetian, Paolo Roselli, had addressed an urgent letter to Melanchthon, in which he implored him in the name of Christ to stand firm against the papists. The princes also finally declared flatly that they could not enter into any further negotiations concerning doctrine. They could not yield anything because their doctrine was founded in God's Word, and the opponents did not want to yield anything. At the same time, they repeatedly invoked a general council. Thus the confession delivered on June 25 remained in its clear, unambiguous form.

Tenth chapter. [^](#)

Last negotiations and closing of the Diet.

When the Lutheran Estates had announced their decision not to negotiate any more about the doctrine, the Emperor told them on September 7, "that Your Majesty has heard with great displeasure and complaint that they [the Lutherans] are still in disagreement with the others [the papist Estates] in the most important articles. His Majesty could not have suspected, since they [the Lutherans] were so few, that they still wanted to introduce such innovations against the old, holy use of the whole Christian Church and to use and stick to a special doctrine, which was contrary to the teachings and faith of the Pope, Her Majesty, King Ferdinand and all princes and estates of the Empire. He wanted to mediate a council with the Pope, but under the condition that the Protestants would become papist again by then. "It could not be tolerated that the matters should remain undiscussed and that the innovations should not be resisted, nor should they be abolished.

Essentially of the same content were all the emperor's rallies until the departure of the Elector of Saxony on September 23. The threats were repeated and intensified. Again and again one came with the impudent assertion that the Lutherans were a new sect and that their confession had been refuted with God's Word "after the valiant counsel of many scholars not of one nation alone." Again and again they put forward the godless principle that the lesser part must also follow the greater part in matters of faith. The emperor also put forward the following argument: if the confession of the Lutherans were right, then "Your Majesty's noble ancestors, emperors and kings,

and the ancestors of other electors and princes must also have been irreligious. This could not be admitted by His Majesty, and thus he could not believe that the Protestants' confession was founded in the Gospel.

We will add a few passages from the speeches with which our fathers responded to these papist assertions and impositions. These answers testify to both the courage and the Christian understanding of the confessors.

To the accusation that the Lutherans were a new sect, they replied, among other things, that "the Protestant princes and estates knew nothing at all of a sect, but what they believed was so firmly founded in God's Word that it was the right, true, Christian faith and could not be called a sect." They went on to say that their church had the form of the ancient apostolic church. It was the papal church that had introduced innovations in doctrine and customs. - They also protested most earnestly against the assertion that their confession had been refuted from Scripture. "Rather, they were convinced that their confession was Christianly and consistently founded in God's holy Word and could not be rejected in any way. They considered it to be so certain of divine truth that they dared to stand before the Last Judgment with it." They would not have failed to refute the Confutation of the Opponent in such a way that Imperial Majesty and all men would have felt that it could not do anything against their confession if they had received the requested copy of it. Nevertheless, they would have had an answer made to what could have been noted under the reading in haste, from which Imperial Majesty would see that everything in their confession was still fixed. With these

words, the speaker, Dr. Brück, presented the Apology of the Augsburg Confession to Count Palatine Frederick. *) The Palatine took it to hand it in to the Emperor. The emperor would also have accepted it (he had already stretched out his hand for it), if King Ferdinand had not whispered a warning in his ear. So the emperor beckoned the count palatine to return the writing.

*) The Lutheran theologians had diligently copied the papist confutation as soon as it was read. They already suspected that they would not be given a copy. On the basis of these notes, Melanchthon had written an Apology of the Augsburg Confession, in which the articles attacked by the papists were defended in detail and clearly. They wanted to hand this apology to the emperor on September 22. After the conclusion of the Diet, this writing was further elaborated by Melanchthon. Luther says that "by this Melanchthon made up for and amply compensated for all that he should have provided by his too great love of peace and submission with his at the same time anxious and fearful disposition." This apologia was soon excluded from the confessional writings of the Lutheran Church.

The imperial farewell, published on September 22, contained essentially the following: The emperor promised to mediate with the pope the council desired by the Protestants; it was to be announced within six months. A period of reflection until April 15 of the coming year was granted as to whether to settle with the Roman Church. But in the meantime nothing was to be printed or sold in matters of faith. Nor should anyone be free to convert to the Lutherans in the meantime. The assertion that the Lutheran confession had been refuted by the Scriptures was also repeated.

The Lutheran estates were unable to accept this agreement. The Elector of Brandenburg threatened: "If

the united [Lutheran] princes did not want to accept the published farewell, His Majesty would be caused to hold thereon as was due to them. In addition, he [the Elector of Brandenburg] had been instructed by electors, princes and estates to report that Imperial Majesty had conspired with them and they with Imperial Majesty, had sworn and bound themselves to put their property and blood, life and limb, land and people at stake so that this trade would be brought to an end. The Lutherans replied that "they would be submissive to His Majesty in everything in which it was possible with God and a good conscience; against their confession of faith, however, it was quite impossible for them according to their conscience to consent to the imperial farewell and to accept its contents. They finally declared that they would now have to leave the matter alone and command God.

These last statements were made on the morning of September 23. The Elector of Saxony was not present at first, because he was preparing to leave the same day. Towards noon he entered and testified once again before all present that "he knows with the utmost certainty that his confession is so firmly and immovably founded in the Holy Scriptures that not even the gates of hell could overpower it". Thereupon he took leave of the emperor. The emperor extended his hand to him, as was customary, and said, "Ohm, Ohm, that [I] would not have provided myself to your dear." The elector could not speak a word because of movement and left the hall with watering eyes. "It would be very wrong to believe," says a recent historian, "that the Elector of Saxony was politically interested in being able to oppose the Emperor. He was heartily sorry to have to part with his emperor and lord in this way; but it could not be otherwise now."

The Diet continued for two months after the departure of the Elector of Saxony. The final resolution, dated November 19, was even more threatening against the Lutherans than the one published on September 22. No distinction was made between Lutherans, Zwinglians, Anabaptists and rebellious peasants. The edict of Worms was to be enforced in all severity. The disobedient were finally to be punished by the imperial power. But - "decide on a council, and nothing will come of it! Talk it over, and nothing will come of it; for here is Immanuel," Isa. 8:10. The emperor soon found himself in such distress that he could not think of carrying out the Augsburg agreement. 300,000 Turks threatened the Austrian lands. King Ferdinand wanted to buy peace with the most shameful conditions in order to have a free hand for the execution of the Augsburg agreement. However, the Turks rejected all peace conditions. Thus, peace had to be granted to the Lutherans in matters of religion, in order to be able to defeat the Turks with their help.

Chapter Eleven. [^](#)

Luther and the Augsburg Confession.

Wonderful! At this time, when at Augsburg the truth brought to light by Luther is so publicly testified and a confession is delivered, in which the orthodox church will be found next to God's word until the Last Day: at this so important time Luther is not personally with the comrades and disciples standing in the hot battle.

Luther, as we have seen, had been left behind by his

elector in Koburg. And here he remained during the entire Diet. But although several days' journey away from Augsburg, he was always with his fighting people, with prayer and supplication, with exhortation and consolation, with teaching and rebuke. To speak humanly, we would not have an Augsburg Confession if Luther had been inactive and excluded from the Lutheran cause during the summer of 1530. Some evidence of this is given below.

It was Luther, above all, who prayed for the confessors at Augsburg. Luther is not only the greatest teacher of the church since the time of the apostles, but without a doubt also the most powerful praying man. And at no time in his life did he brandish this weapon against Satan's kingdom more mightily than at the time of his stay at Koburg. Veit Dietrich, who was with Luther at Koburg during the Diet, wrote to Melanchthon on July 20: "I cannot marvel enough at Luther's excellent constancy, joy, faith and hope in these miserable times. But he increases such things daily through diligent practice of God's Word. Not a day goes by in which he does not take at least three hours for prayer, which are the most difficult hours for study. I once succeeded in hearing him pray; help, God, what a spirit, what faith is in his words! He prays so devoutly as one who talks with God, with such hope and faith as one who talks with his father. I know," he said, "that you are our dear God and Father; therefore I am sure that you will destroy the persecutors of your children. But if you do not, the journey is yours as well as ours. What we have done, that we must do; therefore may you, dear Father, protect them.'

When I heard him pray such words with a bright voice from afar, my heart burned with great joy, because I heard him speak so kindly and devoutly to God; but especially because he pressed so hard on the promises from the Psalms, as if he were sure that everything he desired must come to pass. Therefore, I have no doubt that his prayer will be of great help in this lost cause, which will be dealt with at the present Diet." Luther himself says at the end of a letter that he wrote to Melanchthon on May 30. I pray for you, I have asked and will ask, and I have no doubt that I am heard, for I feel the Amen in my heart." "Was this not," says Mathesius in his sermons on Luther's life, "a prayer of Moses for the witness and warrior of God, who lay in battle at Augsburg against the troublesome Satan? With these paternoster stones, they hurled back the great Goliath, the troublesome Satan, and all his infernal helpers". Yes, Luther was really for the fellow believers fighting in Augsburg what Moses was for the Israelites fighting under Joshua against Amalek according to Exodus 17:8-13. Let us listen to Mathesius further on this: "Because this Diet was set up primarily against Doctor Luther's doctrine and [against those who] helped to preach this doctrine and considered it to be right in their countries and cities, our doctor does not celebrate like Moses, since he sends his faithful servant Joshua into the field armed with many good men against King Amalek. For Doctor Luther also held the rod and staff of God in his hand and stood before God's face and lifted up his holy and heavy hands in the knowledge of the Lord Christ, so that he pressed hard and weakened the papacy, and cried out to God day and night, that he would preserve his kingdom and the right Josuits and German knights, who were in the field at Augsburg with the

little ones against the Antichrist, in right faith and pure doctrine, and strengthen and comfort them with his Spirit, and guard and encircle them with his little ones."

But Luther did not only stand by his own with prayer, but also with exhortation and consolation.

Comforted by Luther's encouragement, the head of the Lutheran princes, Elector John of Saxony, proved so steadfast. The Elector sent Luther, who was often ill, physical medicine from his personal physician Dr. Caspar; in return, Luther sent the Elector the spiritual medicine of divine comfort.

It was especially Melanchthon, however, who was in need of support. Melanchthon, as has already been said, was at times afflicted by a timidity and pusillanimity that threatened to become dangerous to the cause of the gospel.

In such hours of challenge, Melanchthon wrote to Luther shortly after the handover of the Confession, for example, as follows: "We are here in the greatest misery and must constantly shed tears. . . . Now, my dear father, I do not want to increase my pain with many words, but only give you to consider in what place and in what great danger we are, since we can have no refreshment at all except your comfort. The sophists and monks are running every day to try to get the emperor against us. Those who were on our side before are not there now, and we float completely abandoned and despised in infinite danger." In a letter from the same time he says: "I cannot guess what is to be hoped for or feared, since we are surrounded with so many enemies." Yes, Melanchthon escaped the words in some letters that he had

only followed Luther's reputation in this great matter. *) Jonas asks Luther under June 29: "I wanted. You wrote to Philip as soon as possible. He is challenged at times by the greatest sadness because of the common good."

*) Luther seriously reprimanded Melanchthon for such speech. He wrote to Melanchthon on June 28: "I am displeased in your letter that you write that you have followed me as the head in this matter for the sake of my reputation. I do not want to name anything, nor do I want to command anything, nor do I want to be called the author. And even if one would like to find a convenient interpretation of this, I still do not want the word. If the matter is not at the same time yours and concerns you as well as me, then it should not be said that it is mine and imposed on you by me, but I will conduct it myself, if it is mine" - It was really only the flesh that had made Melanchthon write such words. In spirit, the dear Melanchthon was convinced of the correctness of the Lutheran doctrine from God's Word. He wanted to become blessed through what was known in the Confession. However, in the challenge he often felt little of the conviction wrought by the Holy Spirit. And he complained to Luther about his distress in order to be strengthened by this rock-solid conviction of faith. A recent theologian writes: "The stern tone with which Luther rebuked Melanchthon's small faith in several letters did not stop him from repeatedly seeking his comfort and advice and, precisely because he felt how necessary such a disciplinarian and rebuke was for him, from clinging to him all the more tightly. It is touching to see him knocking on his door again and again to hear his opinion about the progress of the negotiations with the papists. ... One thinks one can see the tender ivy that keeps entwining the trunk of the oak tree that is his support."

Could Luther now give comfort? He also had to endure the most severe trials at Koburg. He was very much physically ill, so that he, as he himself writes, had already chosen a place for his grave in Koburg. Satan attacked him with sickness and nightmares. But he also drank unceasingly from the right source of comfort, so that he could write: "I mock Satan's angel who smites me with fists." He ceaselessly read and contemplated God's Word, especially the glorious promises God has given to His Word and its confessors. He made himself a register of choice sayings of the

Holy Scriptures, that he might always have them ready for his comfort. Yes, he wrote the words in large letters on the wall: "I will not die, but live and proclaim the work of the Lord," Ps. 118:17. He also diligently used absolution and Holy Communion. Mathesius writes: "Here I should mention in one word how our doctor, in his anguish, often sought holy absolution from the priest of the place, Mr. Johann Karg, and received hearty consolation through Holy Communion, and how he often praised his confessor for this, through which word the Lord Christ wonderfully refreshed him.

Thus comforted in challenge and distress, but also always comforted with the right consolation, Luther was now able to comfort others and especially the despondent Melanchthon. These letters of comfort that Luther wrote to Augsburg testify to the most powerful faith that a person has ever had since the time of the apostles. Whoever reads these letters must feel something similar to what Veit Dietrich felt when he heard Luther pray at Koburg: "My heart burned in my body for great joy. Every Christian must be stirred to faith and strengthened in trust in God's promises by the faith expressed in these letters of Luther.

Luther had a rock-solid conviction of the correctness of what was presented in the Confession. He wrote to Melanchthon: "Day and night I live in these things. I search the Scriptures, ponder, debate; daily my certainty grows. And because he knew so surely that the cause of the confessors at Augsburg was God's cause, he was also sure in faith that God Himself would take up the cause and not let it perish. He wrote to Melanchthon: "Take care, Philip, that you

do not offend yourself too much in a matter that is not in your hands, but in the hands of him who is greater than he who rules in the world, and from whose hand no one can snatch us. . . . Cast your concern upon the Lord, who quickeneth the dead, who restoreth and healeth the brokenhearted. The God of all comfort, into whose bosom and hands I commend you all, has Himself called and chosen us to spread His glory."-"I am quite well and finely satisfied as to the common cause. For I know that it is right and true and, what is even more good, Christ's and God's own. Therefore I am almost an idle spectator and would not give a damn about the papists or their raging and dreading. If we fall, Christ also falls, namely the ruler of the world. And even though he falls, I would rather fall with Christ than stand with the emperor." - "If Christ is not with us, we will never find him in the whole world. If we are not the church or a part of the church, where is the church? Are the dukes of Bavaria, the pope, the Turk and their kind the church? If we do not have God's word, who is he who has it? But if God is with us, who is against us? Yes, you say, we are sinners and ungrateful. Well, beloved, listen, he does not become a liar because of this. About this we cannot be sinners in such a holy, divine thing, though we are otherwise wicked in our ways. But you do not want to hear this, so Satan torments and offends you. May Christ help you, I sincerely pray without ceasing. Amen."

But of course, the fact that the cause of those who confess God's pure word is so excellent is recognized here on earth only by faith, not by sight. Thus Luther strongly inculcated in those fighting at Augsburg that they should get used to the fact

that God's things here on earth are done by faith. One must do God the honor of believing in his word, in which he promised that he would surely give victory to his truth and its confessors. One must be satisfied with this promise of God and trust it, even if it seems as if God's cause is lost. But whoever wants to see here only with his natural eyes and judge according to his reason can only have sorrow, grief and trepidation. Luther wrote to Melanchthon on June 28: "The end and the outcome of the matter torment you because you cannot understand it. But I say this much, if you could understand it, I would not like to be a part of it, much less be a head or a beginner in it. God has placed it in a place that you do not find in your rhetoric, nor in your philosophy; the same place is called faith, in which all things stand that we can neither see nor comprehend. Whoever wants to make them visible, apparent and comprehensible, as you do, has heartache and weeping to reward, as you also have against our will. The Lord has said that he will dwell in a mist, and has placed darkness in which he is hidden. He who wills, let him do otherwise! If Moses had wanted to understand the end, how the people of Israel would escape from Pharaoh's army, perhaps they would still be in Egypt this day. May the Lord give you and all the others faith! If you have it, what will the devil do to you and the whole world?" In a letter of June 26, Luther thus addresses Melanchthon: "Grace and peace in Christ! In Christ I say, and not in the world. Amen! I am heartily grateful for your great concern, by which you are weakened, as you write. That it is so prevalent in your heart is not the fault of the great thing, but of your unbelief. For this

very thing was much greater in the time of John Hus and many others than in our own. And even if it were great, he who has brought it about and leads it is also great, for it is not ours. Why do you offend yourselves so constantly and without ceasing? If the thing is wrong, let us revoke it. But if it is right, why do we make God a liar in such great promises, because he calls us to be of good cheer and content? Cast your care, he says, on the Lord. The Lord is near to all the sorrowful hearts that call upon him. Do you think that he speaks such things to the wind or throws them at the door? I am also often afraid, but not always. So your philosophy, not theology, troubles you, just as if you could do something with your useless worry. What more can the devil do than kill us? I ask you for God's sake, because you otherwise fight in all other things, fight against yourselves; for you are your own greatest enemy, because you give the devil so much defense against yourselves. Christ died for sin once, but for righteousness and truth he will not die, but live and reign. Is this true, what care we for the truth, because he reigns? Yes, you say, but it will be struck down by God's wrath. So let us be struck down with it, but not by ourselves. He who has become our father will also be the father of our children. I truly pray for you with diligence, and it pains me that you greedily suck the sorrow into yourself like the water urchin sucks the blood, and make my prayer so powerless. As far as the matter is concerned, I am not particularly distressed. What? I have a better hope than I would have thought? . . . If we do not want to comfort ourselves with his [God's] promises, who else is there in the world whom they concern?" Luther wrote to Spalatin on

June 30: "That the kings, princes, and nations rage and rage against Christ, I consider to be a good sign and better than if they were hypocritical and pretended to be friendly; for it follows: He that dwelleth in heaven laugheth at them, and the Lord mocketh at them. He does not mock them for his own sake, but for ours, so that we too may be confident and laugh at their vain attempts. Everything depends on faith, so that the cause of faith may continue in faith. He who began the work did it without all our counsel and diligence, has so far continued and protected it above all our counsel and diligence, and will also complete and carry it out without and above all our counsel and diligence. I do not doubt it at all; I know it and am sure of it and believe him, because he is mighty and can do more than we can ask and understand, although Philip directs and would like to do it according to his advice and according to his insights, so that he would also have an honor from it. No, it does not have to say: I, Philip. I is too small. It is: I will be who I will be'; that is his name: One does not see who he is, but he will be; there we will see it."-- Luther wanted to keep his own in the faith. If they once wanted to trust in the flesh, he tried to take this trust away from them. When Spalatin once told Luther that the emperor had shown himself more friendly toward them, Luther replied: "But I have no hope that he will support our cause or help us, even if he were willing to do so. For how should a single man be able to stand against so many evil spirits? Therefore God alone is our confidence, who is mighty in weakness, and delighteth to refresh and

comfort the foolish, and to help the forsaken. ... Before we are helped, we must first be forsaken."

We cannot conclude this section without sharing a letter from Luther to the Chancellor of Electoral Saxony, Dr. Brück. In it, Luther describes in a parable the unnecessary worry of those who think that the cause of the Word of God must perish because such powerful enemies dispute it, while it is supported by the almighty hand of God, although invisible to the fleshly eye. It says in this letter: "I saw two miracles the other day. The first was when I looked out of the window at the stars in the sky and the whole vault of God, and yet I saw no pillars anywhere on which the Master had set such a vault, nor did the sky fall, nor does such a vault still stand firm. Now there are some who look for such pillars and would like to grasp and feel them; because they are unable to do so, they fidget and tremble as if the sky would surely fall in, for no other reason than that they cannot grasp or see the pillars. If they could grasp them, the sky would stand firm. The other: I also saw thick, great clouds hovering over us with such weight that they might be compared to a great sea, and yet I saw no ground on which they rested or footed, nor skids in which they were bound; nor did they fall on us, but greeted us with a sour face and fled away. When they had passed, the ground shone forth, and our roof, which had held them, the rainbow. But this was a weak, thin, low ground and roof, that it also disappeared in the clouds, and more a shadow (as to shine through a painted glass), than such a mighty ground was to be seen, that one should despair even of the ground so much as of the great

water load. Nevertheless, it was indeed found that such an impotent [to look at] shadow carried the water load and protected us. There are still some who regard, respect, and fear the thick and heavy burden of the water and the clouds more than this thin, narrow, and light scheme; for they would like to feel the power of such a scheme; because they cannot, they fear that the clouds would cause an eternal deluge."

But Luther did not only comfort those in need of consolation in Augsburg. He also instructed his brothers, who, in view of the complicated situation, continued to seek advice and instruction from him. "For the sake of the honor of the Gospel," Melanchthon wrote to Luther, "I ask you to take care of us. In order to have Luther's advice at hand for all difficult cases, the Elector had taken him with him to the southernmost city of the Electorate of Saxony.

And Luther was able to advise and instruct the disputants in Augsburg. A good commander must know not only himself and his army, but above all the enemy, his strength and weakness, his way of warfare. Now Luther knew Satan and his scales, the Pope and his clergy, by God's grace "a good deal more and better" than all his brothers at Augsburg. Thus he always knew how to give the right advice. Yes, one can confidently claim that Luther from Koburg understood the whole situation at Augsburg better than all princes, statesmen and theologians.

Initially, the Protestants still had good hopes for the emperor. Even if he did not take up their cause, he would at least show himself to be just. Luther soon realized that this hope was a vain one. When he learned that the emperor had forbidden Lutheran sermons, he no longer hoped for reconciliation. He foresaw that the emperor would now continue to urge

the princes to abandon all their teachings. Not as if he thought the emperor a malicious and obdurate enemy of the gospel. On the contrary, he always speaks of him with the greatest reverence. But he knew him completely under the influence and in the power of the enemies. On June 30, he wrote to the Elector: "It is true that the Emperor is a pious heart, worthy of all honor and virtue, to whom too much honor may not be done on account of his person. But, dear God, what can a man do against so many devils where God does not help mightily?

Above all, Luther clearly recognized that it was in vain to negotiate doctrinal unity with the papists. He knew how great a gulf was fixed between the two parts, that his own led God's word and the devil's cause, that the whole papacy was based on diabolical heresy and that the whole papacy would have to fall if its heresies were seriously abandoned. It could only be lies and deception if the defenders of the papacy showed themselves pliable and friendly. He wrote to Melanchthon on August 26: "I do not like it at all that one wants to act of unity of doctrine, because the same is impossible, where the pope does not want to dismiss his whole papacy. It would have been enough if we had declared the cause of our faith and desired peace. But that we should convert them to the truth, how can we hope? . . . It is certain that they condemn our doctrine, in that they do not repent, and so presume to maintain their doctrine. On the same day Luther wrote to Spalatin: "I hear, though not very gladly, that you have begun a wonderful work and want to compare the Pope and Luther with each other. But the Pope will not

want it, and Luther also asks for it. If, however, you should be able to carry out the matter against both wills and desires, then I will follow your example without any loss of time and compare Christ and Belial as well.

Luther stated clearly and firmly from the beginning that there could be no thought of deviating from the confession that had been handed over. The yielding was only proper for the papists, who led the doctrine of man. *) Melanchthon once expressed the

*) It is worth mentioning here a strange writing of Luther's, which he addressed from Koburg "To the entire clergy, assembled at Augsburg on the Imperial Diet Anno 1530". In it, he briefly and strikingly exposes the great corruption of the Roman Church in doctrine and life. He shows how the papacy is made up of nothing but innovations that run directly counter to the teachings of Christ and the apostles. Thus he admonishes the "entire [papist] clergy" not to think about how to dampen the Lutherans, but rather the opponents would like to use this imperial diet to dismiss their thing, which is contrary to God's word. It says in this writing: "You may not do anything on my and my like account; for the right helper and counselor has brought us and our things so far and placed them where they should remain, and since we also want to leave it that we do not need a Diet, a council, or a master for ourselves, we also do not want to have this from you, as we know that you are not able to do it better, or even so well. For we come under Turks or Tartars, under Pope or Devil, our cause is certain, that we know how to believe and live, how to teach and do, how to suffer and pray, how to heal and die, where to wait, fetch and find everything and where to stay at last, according to the word of St. Paul, Rom. 8, 28: To the elect the Spirit creates all things for their good. God has abundantly given us this through Christ our Lord, and it is already known and confirmed through the blood and suffering of many pious people (killed by your part). Not that we are perfect and have attained everything, but that we have the right rules, as St. Paul says (Phil.3,16), the right way and the right beginning before us, and nothing is lacking in doctrine, life as it may be. But for you and for the poor people, if there is still no report among you or if it is ever uncertain, we take care of it and would like to help here with prayers and admonitions, as best we can. This writing caused a tremendous stir, especially since the bishop of Augsburg read it out publicly in a meeting of the papist estates.

They were concerned whether the Augsburg Confession was not perhaps too sharp and harsh. Luther replied, "If they [the papists] do not want to accept it, I do not know what more I could give in." And on August 10, he wrote to Melanchthon, "We cannot deviate from the articles concerning doctrine, because they are not only founded in Scripture, but also proven by the writings of the fathers. If, however, the imperial majesty desires an explanation of some of them, our part is always required to do so. With regard to the articles concerning abuses, we likewise cannot deviate from both forms in the sacrament, because it is a divine order which Christ Himself instituted. In the case of clerical marriage, we also cannot agree that marriage should be forbidden to anyone. And Paul calls such prohibition a doctrine of the devil, 1 Tim. 4:1, 3. That the private mass should be reestablished or suffered, we cannot therefore approve, because in the day it is a public abuse and idolatry and strives against the main article of faith in Christ. So neither the minor nor the major canons are to be suffered, because they are also contrary to the doctrine of faith and blaspheme the suffering of Christ. As for the undischarged monasteries, we will gladly consent to the persons who are in them remaining and being cared for. But that one should handle and protect their masses and other ungodly things is contrary to the above articles. That one should deal with the jurisdiction of the bishops is a vain thing. For where they do not suffer us and do not indulge in anything, but want to condemn us straight away, we cannot expect any jurisdiction from them without Master Hansen. It is true that if they wanted to suffer our doctrine and no longer follow it, we would not want to harm their jurisdiction, dignity or whatever they call it. For we certainly do not desire to be

bishops nor cardinals, but only good Christians; who shall be poor, Matt. 5 and Luk. 6."

The papists demanded from the Lutheran estates the surrender of the monasteries which had been abandoned by the monks and whose goods had now been used for the establishment of schools, for the care of the poor, etc. The monasteries had been abandoned. Luther gave his own in Augsburg the following excellent counter-calculation: "If they will speak much of restoring the monasteries and ecclesiastical revenues, we also have to demand that they restore and give back to us Leonhard Kaisern, who was burned in Bavaria, and many others whom they miserably executed, so many souls whom they plunged into ruin with their godless teachings, and so many unspeakable sums of money which they gathered with their fraudulent indulgences and in other hopeless ways. that they restore to God his honor, which they have profaned from him with so many blasphemies; that they restore and repair the purity and sincerity of the church, and the holiness of life, which have been utterly destroyed with so many abominations and obscenities; and who can describe all that is more to be demanded? If they do and perform what they owe in this case, we would like to trade with them afterwards from the possessorium - or what one part has to look back to the other still further."

Thus Luther was teaching, exhorting and comforting the confessors in Augsburg. "God willing," he wrote to Melanchthon, "I could also be with you in body. When the conclusion of the negotiations at Augsburg was imminent and he saw that the glorious confession had been upheld, he wrote joyfully to the theologians: "I have asked him [the Elector] to let me receive and greet you on your return, so that I may wipe off your sweat after

your hot bath of fear. You have confessed Christ, offered peace, obeyed the emperor, endured injustice and abuse, and in doing so have not repaid evil with evil. You have carried out the holy work of God worthily, as befits pious people. Therefore rejoice in the Lord and exult, you righteous. Long enough have you had sorrow in the world; lift up your heads and look on high, for your redemption draws near!"

Luther later said: "The Catechism, the interpretation of the Ten Commandments and the Augsburg Confession are mine. From what has been said in this chapter, it is clear enough how Luther could speak with truth. From him mainly were the writings (the Schwabach and Torgau Articles), which Melanchthon used as templates in writing the Confession. Under his continuous supervision the Confession was written, and finally the Confession was also secured by him against the danger of being dropped in essential points.

An old theologian of our church writes: "The confession actually comes from Luther, whom Melanchthon calls the master teacher in this whole matter," and a theologian of our time remarks: "It is undoubtedly largely due to this so paternally mild, *) lenient and yet faith-strengthening behavior of Luther towards those impulses of fear and weakness, as they had taken hold of Melanchthon in that critical time,

Luther understood the admonition. He combined the stern seriousness with the fatherly mildness that wins the heart and makes it cheerful. He began a letter to Melanchthon, who was very depressed at the time: "To Magister Philipp Melanchthon, the faithful confessor of Christ and true witness, his dearest brother: Martin Luther. Grace and peace in Christ!"

that the same finally regained his courage, returned to his former firmness, and in the Apology maintained and defended to its full extent what was known in the Confession."

Chapter Twelve. ^ _

Retrospection and key memory.

Finally, let us look back at the behavior of our fathers in the confession days at Augsburg. Johann Brenz writes with regard to the Lutheran princes: "Our princes are most steadfast in the confession of the gospel. Yes, the Lutheran princes - and especially the Elector John of Saxony - showed a courage and a confessional joy at Augsburg that all Lutherans must admire and praise to God until the Last Day, with praise and thanksgiving. God filled the hearts of these men with power from on high, so that they were willing to give up life and limb, honor and dominion, property and friendship for the sake of the gospel. They are models of Christian confessors.

The Elector of Saxony was not only repeatedly denied the electoral dignity because of his steadfast confession of the truth, but, as we have already seen, he was virtually threatened with expulsion from the country and its people. The Elector did not doubt that it could come to that. But nevertheless he did not yield and did not waver. According to Matth. 10,32, on which text he had a sermon preached before his departure to Augsburg, he sharply and incisively

posed the either-or question. He said: "Either deny God or deny the world - who can doubt which is best? God has made me an elector of the empire, which I have never been worth. He instructed his councillors: "Tell my scholars to do what is right, to praise God, and not to look at me or my country and people." On his departure from Augsburg, the Landgrave Philip of Hesse left a letter with the Elector of Saxony, in which he admonished him not to let himself be moved by threats and flattery to depart from the word of God. To him, the Landgrave, the Elector had nothing else to provide "but that he will leave body and property, land and people for the word of God". He wrote to his envoys in Augsburg on August 29: "If it cannot be good, it must be ordered to God." The deputies of the city of Nuremberg, when things looked extremely threatening, declared: "A war is indeed to be feared. But for the sake of this fear one must not deny the word of God nor weigh down one's conscience. Rather, one must trust God and therefore command and leave war and peace and all worries to Him."

This was not natural courage, but confessional joy wrought by the Holy Spirit. If the confessors had wanted to ask Augsburg flesh and blood and follow the natural inclination of their hearts, they would have yielded to the urge of the adversaries and chosen external peace. But their consciences were captive to God's Word. Nor were they such people who would have stood up against the papacy out of a natural spirit of opposition and desire for worldly freedom. No, they had recognized by God's grace that the papacy was falsifying God's Word in the most abominable way, thus robbing God of glory and the dearly purchased souls of

salvation. After God had opened their eyes to this abomination, they could not and would not partake of it. Indicative of the sense in which they came forth with the confession of pure doctrine and the rejection of all false teaching are the words with which the first part of the Augsburg Confession closes. "This," it says, "is almost the summa of the doctrine which is preached and taught in our churches for the right Christian instruction and consolation of consciences, and also for the correction of believers, as we would not willingly put our own souls and consciences in the highest and greatest danger before God by misusing the divine name or word, nor would we wish to fall or inherit upon our children and descendants any other doctrine than that which is according to the pure divine word and Christian truth."

Dear Lutheran Christians! By God's grace, here in this new fatherland, we rally around the unchanged Augsburg Confession as the basic confession of our dear Lutheran Church. Now, by God's grace, let us also be truly faithful confessors of the divine truth testified to in this confession of ours!

The example of our fathers, who proved to be such faithful witnesses of the truth, stimulates us to this. Like them, we should be stimulated by our zeal for the glory of God. For every false doctrine is abuse of the divine name and thus dishonor to God. To this we are stimulated, as they are, by concern for our own blessedness, which is put "in the highest and greatest danger" by every false teaching. For only the word of God is a word of life; the word of man in spiritual matters can only bring death and destruction. Finally, let us, like our fathers, be stimulated to hold fast to the truth laid down in our confession

also by our concern for our children and descendants. Let us repeat with all seriousness what our fathers said: "For we did not want to pass on to our children and descendants any other doctrine than that according to the pure divine word and Christian truth. We leave our children the richest inheritance, an inheritance that is infinitely more valuable than all earthly goods, if we, as much as we have, pass on to them the pure understanding of the word of God, as it is so clearly testified in the Augsburg Confession.

To this end, let us diligently read and study all our glorious confessional writings, especially our basic confession, the Augsburg Confession, in addition to the Word of God, so that each one of us can testify to the truth we have recognized in his own circle. To this end, let us strive most diligently to establish and maintain Lutheran schools, both lower and higher.

Let us remember that our fathers were steadfast confessors of the truth in times of extreme danger. We live in a country in which we, protected by the secular authorities against external violence, are allowed to live and confess our true faith without hindrance. How shameful it would be for us, therefore, if we now wanted to depart from the confession of the truth! It is true that the horde of the Antichrist, the pope, is also extremely busy here "according to the working of Satan with all kinds of lying powers and signs and wonders and with all kinds of seduction to unrighteousness", 2 Thess. 2,9.10; to be sure, even here the swarm of sects, who, forsaking the pure word of God, "turn away their ears from the truth, and turn unto fables," 2 Tim. 4:4, is spread over the whole land; but against all enemies and traffickers in the truth we can wield unhindered the sharp, two-edged sword of the word of God. Let the

jubilee of the Augsburg Confession be a reminder to us to cast off, by God's grace, all spiritual slothfulness where such should have crept in. Let us hold up the banner of truth with renewed spiritual courage and strength, and through it the Lord will, according to His promise, "gather together the exiles of Israel and gather together the scattered of Judah," Isa. 11:12.

Second part. [^](#)

The Augsburg Confession.

Foreword.

Most Sublime, Most Great, Most Invincible Emperor, Most Gracious Lord! When Your Imperial Majesty Your Majesty has graciously summoned a general Imperial Diet here in Augsburg with notice and earnest request to consider matters concerning our and the Christian name's hereditary enemy, the Turks, and how they may be resisted with persevering help, and also how the divisions in the holy faith and the Christian religion may be dealt with, To hear, see, and consider with love and kindness all the opinions and views between ourselves, and to bring and compare them to a single Christian truth, to dismiss everything that would not be rightly interpreted or acted on either side, and to adopt and hold by all of us one single and true religion, and, as we are and contend all under one Christ, so also to live all in one fellowship, church, and unity.

And we, the electors and princes mentioned below, together with our relatives, like other electors, princes and estates, were required to do so, so we exalted ourselves to such an extent that we came here with the first ones in particular glory.

And when then also E. K. M. for most submissive consequence touched E. K. M. Ausschreibens and according to the same these things, touching the faith, to electors, princes and estates in general graciously, also with highest diligence and seriously requested that each one by virtue of previously announced E. K. M. Ausschreibens his Gutbedünken, opinion and opinion of the same confusions, divisions and abuses etc.

in German and Latin; from which, after consideration and advice given, it was presented to King's Council last Wednesday, as if we wanted to hand over our part of it in German and Latin for today, Friday, based on King's Council's presentation: therefore, and subject to King's Council. K. M. to most humble obedience we hand over and deliver our pastors, preachers and their teachings, also our confession of faith, what and in which way they preach, teach, hold and teach on the basis of divine Holy Scripture in our countries, principalities, dominions, cities and territories.

And we are against E. K. M., our most gracious lord, we, in all subservience, request that the other Electors, Princes and Estates will now also do the same, by submitting their opinions and views in writing in Latin and German, that we will gladly communicate with their loved ones and with them in convenient, uniform ways, and that we will unite them as much as possible in accordance with equality, as much as is always possible for the sake of equality, so that our mutual, as parties, written submission and afflictions may be dealt with between ourselves in love and kindness, and the same divisions may be brought to a unified true religion, as we are all under one Christ and are to contend and confess Christ, all according to the oft-reported E. K. M. K. M.'s decree and according to divine truth. Therefore, we call upon God Almighty in the greatest humility and ask him to grant us his divine grace. Amen.

Where, however, with our lords, friends, and especially the electors, princes, and estates of the other part, the action of the kind which E. K. M. has written out, would not be caught in love and kindness among ourselves, nor would it be fruitful, as it should not be with us in anything which can or may be conducive to

Christian unity with God and conscience; as E. K. M. has also reported to our friends, the electors, princes, estates, and every lover of the Christian religion, also reported our friends, the Electors, Princes, Estates and every lover of Christian religion, to whom these things occur, will have to hear graciously, kindly and sufficiently from subsequent confessions of ours and theirs.

Since Our Lord had previously graciously given the Electors, Princes and Estates of the Empire to understand, and especially by a publicly read instruction at the Imperial Diet held at Speier in the year of the lesser number 26, that Our Lord had not meant to conclude matters concerning our holy faith for reasons reported at that time, but had wanted to apply to the Pope for a council and to hold it. in matters concerning our holy faith, for reasons reported at that time, did not mean to do so, but wanted to apply to the pope for a council and stop it; and a year ago, at the last Imperial Diet at Speier, by means of a written instruction, electors, princes and estates of the empire, through E. K. M. governor, wanted to have a council held. K. M. Governor in the Empire, Royal Dignities in Hungary and Bohemia, etc., together with E. K. M. Orator and appointed commissioners, have presented this, among other things, and have indicated that E. K. M. wants to keep the same. E. K. M. of the same governors, administrators and councillors of the imperial regiment, as well as of the absent electors, princes and ambassadors of the estates, who were assembled at the announced Imperial Diet at Regensburg, have deliberated at their discretion on the matter of the General Council and have also found it fruitful to schedule such a council. Since, however, these matters between His Holiness and the Pope are of good Christian understanding, and since His Holiness is certain that the Pope will not refuse to hold the General Council, His Holiness is graciously requested to demand and act that the Pope grant such a General Council to be the first to be proclaimed in addition to His Holiness, and that there should be no lack of it.

Thus, in all subservience to Her Royal Highness and to the abundance in the case in question, we hereby further request such a common, free, Christian council, which has been concluded at all imperial diets held by Her Royal Highness during her reign in the empire, by electors, princes and estates from high and brave movements, to which also together Her Royal Highness we have appealed for this most important matter in a legal manner and form at various times. we have referred to and appealed in a legal manner and form at various times on account of this most important matter, to which we herewith once again remain pending and do not know how to surrender by this or subsequent action (unless these conflicting matters are finally heard, considered, settled and brought to a Christian agreement in love and kindness in accordance with the letter from Your Royal Highness), of which we herewith publicly testify and protest. And these are our and our confessions, as follows differently from article to article.

Articles of faith and doctrine.

The I. Article.

Of God.

First of all, it is unanimously taught and held according to the *Concilii Nicaeni* that there is one divine being, which is called and truly is God, and yet there are three persons in the same one divine being, equally powerful, equally eternal, God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, all three of them one divine being, eternal, without end, without end, of immeasurable power, wisdom and goodness, a creator and sustainer of all visible and invisible things. And by the word *persona* is understood not a piece, not a quality in another, but that itself exists, as the Fathers used this word in this matter.

Therefore, all heresies contrary to this article are rejected, such as Manichaei, who have set up two gods, one evil and one good. Item Valentiniani, Ariani, Eunomiani, Mahometists and all the like; also Samosatani, old and new, who put only one person and make sophistry of these two, Word and Holy Spirit, saying that they must not be distinct persons, but Word means bodily word or voice, and the Holy Spirit is created emotion in creatures.

In this article the right doctrine of God is confessed. Our fathers also included this article in the Augsburg Confession because papist theologians blasphemed that Lutherans were rejecting, as well as the whole Christian faith, the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. - The true God is the triune. There is one divine being, Deut. 6, 4; 1 Cor. 8, 4; 12, 6; 1 Tim. 2, 6. But in this one divine being there are three persons:

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:13; 1 John 8:7; Gen. 1:26; Deut. 6:24; Ps. 33:6; Isa. 6:3. These persons are distinct from one another, but equally powerful, equally eternal; "none is first, none last; none is greatest, none least." No person has the divine essence more or less than the other, but each has the serious divine essence entirely, for there are no pieces or parts in the one divine essence.

Against this right doctrine of God a number of heretics have risen, who partly deny the one divine being, partly the three persons in the one divine being, partly the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father. The Manichaeans were the followers of the Persian Mani, who lived around 270 A.D. at the New Persian Hose and wanted to concoct a religion from pagan rational wisdom and individual Christian thoughts. To explain the origin of evil in the world, he assumed an evil God in addition to the good one. The Valentinians, the followers of a certain Valentinus, who was a teacher in Alexandria and Rome in the second century after Christ, assumed a series of subordinate deities, which had arisen in pairs from a divine primordial being. The Arians, followers of the presbyter Arius at Alexandria, did not consider the Lord Christ to be the true, essential God, but the first creature, which was only similar to God. This false doctrine was condemned as heresy at the general church assembly held at Nicea in Asia Minor in 325. The Eunomians went even further than the Arians and taught that Christ was unlike the Father in essence. The Mahometists or Mohammedans, the followers of the lying prophet Mohammed (died 630), accept only one person of the Godhead, as do the ancient and new Samosatians. The old Samosatians were the followers of one Paul of Samosata, who had been bishop at Antioch since 260. The so-called new Samosatians appeared at the time of the Reformation as deniers of the Holy Trinity. - In our time and in our country the doctrine of a triune God is rejected by the Unitarians and the Universalists, the Swedenborgians and a part of the Quakers; furthermore most of the so-called free Protestants. These latter still call Christ the Son of God, but by the term "Son of God" they understand only a particularly virtuous man, endowed by God with special gifts. They also still speak of a Holy Spirit, but do not understand by it the third person of the Godhead,

but rather the spirit of virtue in man or also the "spirit of the age. Beware especially of these so-called Protestants, who use biblical and ecclesiastical expressions in order to draw Christians into their fellowship. But because they reject the doctrine of the triune God, they stand outside the Christian church. Our church confesses in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession: "that all those are idolatrous, blasphemers, and outside the church of Christ" who deny the scriptural doctrine of the triune God. A "baptism" performed by them is not a baptism, because they do not baptize in the name of the triune God, according to Christ's command Matth. 28,19, even if they use the correct baptismal formula according to the outward wording. - In more recent times, even those who call themselves Lutherans have reheated the false doctrine of the heretic Arius, albeit somewhat refined. These New Lutherans make a distinction between the deity of the Son and the Holy Spirit and that of the Father. The deity of the Son and the Holy Spirit is said to be subordinate to that of the Father. Thus comes out a doctrine of one supreme God and two sub-gods. Hereby nt denied that God is one, and the Herdnian polytheism is reintroduced into the church. The Christian Church, on the other hand, has always believed, as expressed in the Athanasian Symbolum: "Among these three persons [of the unified divine being] none is the first, none the last, none the greatest, none the least, but all three persons are coeternal, coeternal, so that, as has been said, three persons in one Godhead and one God in three persons may be honored. Whoever then desires to be saved must therefore think of the three persons in God."

The II. Article.

Of Original Sin.

Further, we are taught that after Adam's fall, all men who are born naturally are conceived and born in sins, that is, they are all full of evil desire and inclination from the womb and cannot have true fear of God, true faith in God by nature; that this same inherent pestilence and original sin is truly sin and condemns all those under God's eternal wrath who are not born again through baptism and the Holy Spirit.

In addition, the Pelagians and others are rejected, who do not consider original sin to be sin, so that they make nature pious through natural powers, to the shame of the suffering and merit of Christ.

This article teaches about original sin: 1. There is original sin, and it is common to all who are born naturally, Ps. 51:7; Rom. 5:12. It does not exclude the Virgin Mary, but only Christ, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit according to human nature. Original sin is the depraved state of the natural man, according to which he lacks the divine image (true fear of God, true faith, true love) and on the contrary is by nature full of evil desire and inclination, Gen. 5:3; 8:21. 3. Original sin is truly sin and subjects the one afflicted with it to the wrath of God and damnation, John 3:5, 6; Ephesians 2:3. - The Pelagians were the followers of the British monk Pelagius, who left at the beginning of the fifth century. Pelagius taught that children come into the world without the original sin and are still in the same state as the first humans before the Fall. The fact that most people still sinned was due solely to bad upbringing and the power of bad habits. Thus Pelagius had to maintain that man does not need to be born again by the Holy Spirit, but can make himself virtuous and blessed by natural forces (perhaps with a little help from the side of God, if the "evil habit" has already become very powerful). It is easy to see how this false doctrine could only be led "to dishonor the suffering and merit of Christ". For if man could make himself pious and blessed, the Lord Christ would have done an unnecessary work by suffering the atoning death for men and fulfilling the divine law with his obedience. - Among the "others" rejected in our article is also the Roman church. It is thoroughly Pelagian. It teaches that the natural man's power and will to do good is only somewhat weakened. Furthermore, according to papist doctrine, the evil desire that remains in man after baptism is not sin in itself, but only when it passes over into evil actions. - According to Zwingli and the old Anabaptists, the sects, Methodists, Evangelical Fellowship, etc., also reduce the original sinfulness of man. This can be seen, for example, in the fact that they more and more refrain from baptizing children.

The III. Article.

Of the Son of God.

Again, it is taught that God the Son became man, born of the pure virgin Mary, and that the two natures, divine and human, in one person, thus inseparably united, are one Christ, who is true God and man, truly born, suffered, crucified, died and buried, that he would be a sacrifice not only for original sin, but also for all other sins, and atoned for God's wrath.

Item, that the same Christ descended into hell, truly rose from the dead on the third day, ascended into heaven, seated at the right hand of God, that he should reign and rule over all creatures forever, that he should sanctify, cleanse, strengthen and comfort all who believe in him by the Holy Spirit, and also give them life and all gifts and goods, and protect and shield them against the devil and against sin.

Item, that the same Lord Christ will finally come publicly to judge the living and the dead etc., according to the *Symboli Apostolorum*.

The Reformed Church and all sects separate the two natures in Christ in such a way that consequently the person is also separated and two Christs actually emerge. They deny that the Son of God truly suffered and died, and want to attribute the suffering to the human nature alone, while the scripture explicitly testifies that the whole person, the Son of God and the Son of Man, suffered, but after and in the human nature, Apost. 3,15; 1 Cor. 2, 8; 1 Joh. 1,7; 1 Petr. 3,18. Luther: "If the devil were to accuse me of seeing Christ crucified and dead as a mere man, I would be lost. But if I hang the shah and the weight on the fact that Christ, both true God and man, died for me, that weighs and beats far above all sin, death, hell, and all hammer and heartache."-A part of the Reformed Church also leads the doctrine that Christ did not die for all

men, as yet Scripture testifies most clearly, John 1:29; 3:16; 1 John 2:2, etc., but only for the elect. - The Roman church erroneously teaches that Christ's merit completely wipes out only the guilt of original sin; the guilt of the sin of the deed must be helped to be wiped out by man's own satisfaction. - The Reformed and all sects exclude Christ's human nature from the infinite divine power and glory. Christ is said to be enclosed in heaven after his body, and after the same he cannot be present in the church and especially not in Holy Communion.

The IV. Article.

Of justification.

Furthermore, it is taught that we may not obtain forgiveness of sins and righteousness before God by our merits, works and satisfactions, but that we receive forgiveness of sins and are justified before God by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith, if we believe that Christ suffered for us and that for His sake sins are forgiven, righteousness and eternal life are given to us. For God will count this faith as righteousness before him, as St. Paul says to the Romans in the 3rd and 4th verses.

This article contains the basic doctrine of the Christian faith, which distinguishes it from all false religions. All false religions agree that they want to make man pleasant and blessed before God through something good in man himself. But the Holy Scripture teaches that the righteousness by which a man can stand before God and be saved is the righteousness of Christ, which God imputes by grace, Rom. 3:24, to the one who believes in Christ, Rom. 3:22; 4:5. Thus, that for which a man is counted righteous before God is not a work or a virtue (it may be called whatever it may be) in man, but something apart from him, the perfect righteousness of Christ, which he acquired through his substitutionary life, suffering and death. - In external Christianity this article, by which the Christian Church stands or falls, is most grossly falsified by the Roman

Church, which expressly teaches that justification does not consist in the gracious imputation of Christ's merit, but that the works of the Christian are also absolutely necessary for justification. And because the Roman Church not only rejects the Scriptural doctrine of justification, but expressly curses it, it is also clear here that the Pope is the Antichrist. For the doctrine of justification is, as the Apology of the Augsburg Confession says, "the highest and noblest article of the whole Christian doctrine, without which no poor conscience can have any right, constant, certain consolation." - The Unitarians and the "free Protestants" reject the Christian doctrine of justification and teach in a pagan way that if a man strives to be virtuous, God will be indulgent with him and thus take him to heaven or, as they often say, to the "better hereafter". - The Reformed, Methodists, etc., also say that man is justified by grace for Christ's sake, but they partly cancel out this main doctrine of Christianity by other, false doctrines. For example, they deny the imputation of Christ's active obedience. The Methodists, in their "conversions," proceed as if man, by his repentance, must first move God to forgive him his sins. - The Swedenborgians call belief in the imputation of Christ's righteousness a delusion. - The Mennonites also lead an entirely Papist doctrine of justification.

The V. Article.

Of the ministry of preaching.

To obtain such faith, God has instituted the ministry of preaching, given the gospel and sacraments, through which He gives, as a means, the Holy Spirit, who works faith wherever and whenever He wills in those who hear the gospel, which teaches that we have a gracious God through Christ's merit, not ours, if we believe such things.

And are condemned the Anabaptists and others who teach that without the bodily word of the Gospel we obtain the Holy Spirit by our own preparation, thoughts and works.

Righteousness and blessedness have been acquired for all people through Christ; they are ready for all people. People only need to accept this righteousness, that is, to believe. So now everything depends on man's obtaining faith. How a man obtains faith, our article says, is through the ministry of preaching, that is, through the means of grace ordained by God, the gospel and the sacraments. Through these means of grace the Holy Spirit is given, who works faith in those who are by nature incapable of faith, Rom. 10,17; Gal. 3, 2; 2 Cor. 3, 8. In our article the false teaching of the Anabaptists, a fanatical sect that arose at the time of the Reformation, is rejected. The Anabaptists talked a lot about the need to have the Holy Spirit, but rejected it as a dead literalism when Luther taught that God gives spirit and faith only through the "bodily word of the gospel". What these enthusiasts thought they could not receive through the word of God they had heard, read and contemplated, they believed they could acquire through their own preparation, thoughts and works. - In the footsteps of the swarm spirits at the time of the Reformation, the Reformed sects walk in this country. The proselytizing of the Methodist communities in their class and camp meetings is based on contempt for the divinely ordained means of grace, "just as if," as Luther says in the Schmalkaldic Articles, "the Spirit could not come through the Scriptures or oral word of the apostles, but through their Scriptures and word He must come."

The VI. Article.

Of the new obedience.

It is also taught that such faith should bring forth good fruits and good works, and that one must do good works, all things that God has commanded, for God's sake, but not to trust in such works to merit grace in the sight of God; for we receive forgiveness of sins and righteousness through faith in Christ, as Christ Himself says Luk 17: "If you have done all these things, you shall say: So also the fathers teach. For Ambrose saith, "Thus it is ordained with God,

That whosoever believeth in Christ should be blessed, and not by works, but by faith alone, without merit, have remission of sins."

Because the Lutheran church teaches according to the Scriptures that no work of man is of any use for a man to become righteous and blessed before God, the papists have blasphemed from the beginning that the Lutherans did not want any good works to be done, and even that they forbade good works. In this article, our church first confesses that a Christian must do good works, namely "all that God has commanded," that is, not those that are invented by men, Matth. 15, 9, but those that God demands in the holy Ten Commandments. Then it is said why a Christian must do good works, namely "for God's sake", that is, because it is God's holy will, 1 Thess. 4, 3. But it is a horrible false doctrine that overthrows the whole of Christianity and plunges people into death and damnation when it is taught that a Christian must do good works in order to earn grace and beatitude with them in half or the least part. This denies that Christ has earned forgiveness of sins and beatitude for man. - The Papal Church teaches that good works "truly merit greater grace and eternal life". It even teaches that a person can do even more than God actually requires of him. These are the so-called superfluous good works, which the Church (the Pope) can grant to others through indulgences. - Note also that in our article it says: "It is also taught that such faith should bring forth good fruits and good works." Faith is the source of good works, Gal. 5:6. Far from faith in the gracious forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake alone hindering good works, only a person who believes that God has forgiven his sins, given him life and blessedness for Christ's sake, without works of the law, has the desire and strength to do good works. Only in the heart of a man who has such faith through the action of the Holy Spirit is love for God kindled, so that he now becomes "willing and eager without compulsion to do good to everyone, to serve everyone, to suffer all things, to love and praise God who has shown him such grace. Therefore, all those hinder good works, even make them completely impossible, who do not want to let man believe that he is given life and salvation without merit of works, only by God's grace, for the sake of Christ's merit.

The VII. Article.

Of the church.

It is also taught that there must always be and remain a holy Christian church, which is the assembly of all believers, where the gospel is preached purely and the holy sacraments are administered according to the gospel.

For this is enough for true unity of the Christian church, that the gospel is preached with one mind and the sacraments are administered according to the divine word. And is it not necessary for the true unity of the Christian church that uniform ceremonies, instituted by men, should be held everywhere; as Paul says Eph. 4:5, 6: "One body, one Spirit, as ye are called unto one hope of your profession; one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

In this article, firstly, it is taught that the Church will never perish. The earthly kingdoms, even the most powerful ones, have perished one after the other, but the Christian church will remain until the last day despite all the enemies of the world and the devil, Matth. 16:16. Secondly, it teaches what the church is, namely the assembly of all believers. As many people as are truly born again through the Holy Spirit, that is, believe in Christ as their Savior, belong to the Christian church and form the one holy Christian church, no matter how far apart they may be. For the Christian church "stands principally in communion inwardly of the eternal goods in the heart, as of the Holy Spirit, of faith, of the fear and love of God," as it is said in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession. Thirdly, it is said what are the marks by which it can be known where the Christian church is. These marks are the pure preaching of the gospel and the right administration of the sacraments. It is also said in the Apology: "We do not speak of a fictitious church which is nowhere to be found, but we truly say and know that this church is and remains true on earth, namely that there are some children of God now and then in all the world, in all kinds of kingdoms, islands, countries, cities, from the beginning of the sun to the end of the

world, who have rightly recognized Christ and the gospel and say that this church has these outward signs: the preaching ministry or the gospel and the sacraments." - Even in the sectarian communities, where God's Word is not entirely preached purely and the sacraments are not administered entirely according to Christ's institution, there are still children of God. But these children of God have faith and spiritual life only through the remaining pure Word and sacrament. And through these pieces of the pure word and sacrament there is also revealed the church. - If the gospel is preached with one accord according to pure understanding and if the sacraments are administered according to the institution, this is enough for true unity of the Christian church. One must not demand more than belongs to the essential unity. The papists and the Episcopalians mistakenly demand uniformity in ecclesiastical customs, forms of worship and external constitution. But one must also demand nothing less than the right preaching of the Word of God and the proper administration of the sacraments. In the united church communities the false reformed teachings are tolerated, and in the German so-called Lutheran State churches also such teachers find shelter, who have left the pure understanding of the gospel in many respects, and even present pagan-rationalistic teachings in word and writing. Therefore, in these church communities there are individual Lutheran believers and individual Lutheran preachers, but the communities as such do not have the form that they should have according to God's Word and our confession. In these communities the gospel is preached from time to time and by this or that pastor, but not unanimously, that is, not by all, according to pure understanding. Therefore, every Christian is obliged to leave these communities and to join those who stick to Christ's speech in all things.

The VIII. Article.

What the church is.

Item, although the Christian church is really nothing else than the assembly of all believers and saints, yet, because in this life there are many false Christians and hypocrites, even public sinners remain among the pious, the sacraments are nevertheless powerful, although the priests, through whom they are administered,

are not pious; as Christ Himself indicates Matth. 23,2: "Out of the chair of Moses sit the Pharisees" etc.

Therefore, the Donatists and all others who hold otherwise are condemned.

In this article it is once again explicitly stated: Members of the church are only the believers. But the outer community of the church will also be mixed with unbelievers and hypocrites at all times. After all, no one can see the faith. Thus, people who do not truly believe, either by pretending to believe or by deceiving themselves into thinking that they are believers, when in fact they are unregenerate, always intrude into the outer community of the church. But for the sake of these non-believers, who are outwardly mixed with it, a congregation does not cease to be a true Christian congregation. Furthermore, by God's permission, it may well happen that a congregation appoints someone to the preaching ministry who is not a born-again person. But the preaching of the Word of God and the administration of the sacraments by a preacher who is not a true believer is still valid and powerful because he does not preach, dew, absolve, administer the Lord's Supper for his own person, but in the name and commission of the congregation and "because the sacraments and the Word are efficacious because of Christ's institution and command." - The Donatists, a sect that arose in the fourth century, taught that only the community was a true church, to which no unbelievers and hypocrites were mixed at all. The official acts of unbelieving preachers were null and void. - The Roman church considers all those to be true members of the church who outwardly obey the statutes of the church (the pope). - Even some modern Lutherans consider all baptized people to be members of the church, even if they have long since lost their faith and have even become deniers of God.

The IX. Article.

Of baptism.

It is taught that baptism is necessary and that grace is offered through it, so that one should also baptize the children who are given over to God and become pleasing through such baptism.

For this reason, the Anabaptists are rejected, who teach that infant baptism is not right.

The Anabaptist sect rejected infant baptism because they taught against Scripture (Matth. 18:3, 6; Mark 10:13-16; Matth. 19:13, 14) that infants could not believe. For the same reason, Baptists and Mennonites in this country reject infant baptism. - It is said in our article that through baptism "grace is offered", that is, presented and given. Baptism is therefore a means by which God offers grace to the baptized and from which faith can and should receive grace, Luk. 7, 30; Apost. 2, 38; Gal. 3, 27. The Reformed and all sects make baptism a mere sign of grace, that is, they do not want baptism to be a means by which God really offers and gives the forgiveness of sins. - Furthermore, in our article it is said that children "become pleasing to God" through baptism. Baptism is the bath of regeneration, that is, a bath through which the Holy Spirit works regeneration, Titus 3:5; John 3:5. This is also denied by the Reformed and the sects. The Heidelberg Catechism wants baptism to be only a "pledge and emblem" of regeneration.

The X. Article.

Of the Holy Communion.

The Lord's Supper is therefore taught that the true body and blood of Christ are truly present in the form of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper and are distributed and taken there. For this reason, the contrary doctrine is also rejected.

The counter doctrine, which is in contradiction with the doctrine known here and is therefore rejected, is 1. the false doctrine of the Reformed and other sects. These deny, against the clear wording of the words of institution, that Christ's body and blood are truly present in the Lord's Supper, distributed and received by all the guests. Bread and wine in the Lord's Supper are only to be symbols and emblems of the absent body and blood of Christ enclosed in heaven. The believing communion guest must raise himself with his devotion to heaven and thus spiritually enjoy Christ's body and blood. The unbeliever therefore receives nothing more in the sacrament than bread and wine. 2 The false teaching of the Roman Church. The papists teach that bread and wine are transformed into the body and blood of Christ by virtue of priestly consecration.

This doctrine of transformation is contrary to 1 Cor. 10:16; 11:27, 28. Paul also calls bread and wine after the consecration or blessing, so both must also be there; on the mutilation of the Lord's Supper on the part of the papists by depriving the laity of the chalice, see the 22nd article of the Augsburg Confession; on the abuse made of the Lord's Supper in the mass, the 24th article. - The Lutheran Church thus rejects both the false doctrine of the papists that bread and wine are changed into Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper, and the false doctrine of the Reformers that bread and wine only signify or represent Christ's body and blood; rather, it teaches that at the same time with the bread Christ's true body and with the wine Christ's true blood are given and received by all, believers and unbelievers, by the believers for the assurance of the forgiveness of their sins, by the unbelievers for judgment, 1 Cor. 11, 27. 29.

The XI. article.

Of confession.

Confession, then, is taught to be *privately absolutionem in church* and not to be dropped; although in confession it is not necessary to tell all iniquity and sins, since such is not possible, Ps. 19:13: "Who knoweth iniquity?"

Rejected here is the papist auricular confession, according to which the confessor is forced to name all mortal sins, otherwise he would not receive forgiveness from God. According to the false Roman doctrine, the priest takes the place of a judge in confession, who has to search for sins and also impose punishments according to the findings. - False teaching of the Reformed and other sects. A preacher is not to have the power to forgive sins in God's stead, but is only to announce forgiveness of sins in general. In contrast, the Lutheran Church teaches according to God's Word (John 20:23; 2 Cor. 2:10; 2 Sam. 12:13; Matt. 3:6; 18:17-20): The preacher can and should, at Christ's command and in Christ's stead, forgive the sins of the one who desires such forgiveness, and the Christian should believe that "the sins are thereby forgiven before God in heaven"; for absolution is "not the present man's voice and word, but God's word, who forgives sin". It is mainly for the sake of this consoling absolution that we Lutherans retain private confession, for which Luther did not want to take a thousand worlds. - Do not confuse, as is often done in this country by ignorant persons, the Roman auricular confession with the

Lutheran private confession. The auricular confession is a Papist lie and a torture of consciences, the Lutheran private confession is an ecclesiastical order based on Scripture, which gives great comfort to those who are challenged. For more on this, see the 25th article of the Augsburg Confession.

The XII. Article.

Of repentance.

Of repentance it is taught that those who have sinned after baptism may at all times, when they come to repentance, obtain forgiveness of sins, and they shall not be denied absolution by the church; and true, right repentance is actually repentance and sorrow or horror over sin, and yet besides this believing in the gospel and absolution, that sins are forgiven and grace obtained through Christ; which faith again comforts and satisfies the heart. After this also repentance should follow, and that one should leave sins; for these are to be the fruits of repentance, as John saith Matt. 3:8, "Work righteous fruits of repentance."

Here are rejected those who teach that those who once became devout may not fall again.

On the other hand, the Novatiani are also condemned, who refused absolution to those who had sinned after baptism.

Also, those are rejected who do not teach that we obtain forgiveness of sins by faith, but by our sufficiency.

The false doctrine that the once converted could not lose the Holy Spirit again and fall entirely from grace was led by the

Anabaptists at the time of the Reformation. The same is taught by the Calvinistic Reformed, the Presbyterians, the Calvinistic Baptists, and the Calvinistic Methodists. These say that the truly born-again lose only the sense of grace through falls from grace, not grace itself. In contrast, God's Word clearly teaches that even those who were truly born again and believers can lose grace and faith entirely through willful sins, Gal. 4:19; 1 Tim. 1:19; Gal. 5:4. - The Novatian sect arose around the middle of the third century. The Novatians did not want to readmit into the Church by absolution those who had fallen into grosser sins after baptism, even if they repented. Through this procedure they believed they could most promote a serious Christian life. And yet they were in a terrible error, which is why our Church condemns it in the most serious way. It is true that every Christian congregation has the sacred duty to punish the sins of its members with God's Word, and even to exclude unrepentant public sinners from the congregation, 1 Cor. 5:13. But if a sinner does true repentance and seeks the fellowship of the Christian church again, the congregation may not refuse absolution to such a person, even if he had committed the most heinous sin and it were to be feared that the hypocritical, self-righteous world would mock such a congregation. The Lord Christ was not ashamed of the sexton on the cross, Luk 23:43. - The third rejected heresy is led by the papists. They teach that repentance consists of three parts: repentance in the heart, confession of sins with the mouth, and satisfaction through works. All three parts, especially the last, are said to have meritorious power. With this doctrine of repentance, no troubled conscience can come to rest. Because reconciliation with God is based on human works, and an awakened conscience can easily recognize their imperfection, man must always remain uncertain whether he is truly reconciled with God. - In contrast, this article teaches that true repentance consists of two things: repentance and faith. A man must first "repent and be sorry or afraid of sin," that is, recognize himself as a lost and condemned sinner; secondly, he must believe in the gospel and the absolution that his sin is forgiven for Christ's sake. If the heart is thus comforted and made joyful by the forgiveness of sins, then improvement of life should and will follow. The improvement of life, however, is not a part of repentance, but a fruit and consequence of it.

The XIII. Article.

On the use of the sacraments.

Regarding the use of the sacraments, it is taught that the sacraments are not only instituted to be signs so that Christians may be known outwardly, but that they are signs and testimonies of divine will toward us, to awaken and strengthen our faith through them; therefore, they also require faith and are then used properly when they are received in faith and the faith is strengthened through them.

The sacraments are however also signs, thereby one may know outwardly the Christians. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are found only in the Christian church. Those who use baptism and the Lord's Supper want and should also be recognized as Christians by this. That is why it is a sin to be in communion with unbelievers and false believers, 1 Cor. 10:21. But it is not the next and most important purpose of the sacraments to be external signs of recognition. Their main purpose is to be "signs and testimonies of the divine will" toward us; that is, they tell and testify to everyone who uses them how God means him, namely, that in these sacraments and through them for Christ's sake God gives him forgiveness of sins, life and blessedness. Through his baptism and Holy Communion every Christian receives for his person a reliable and clear answer to the important question: What thoughts does God have against me? The Reformed and all sects deny that forgiveness of sins is offered through the sacraments themselves; they want an assurance of forgiveness besides and apart from the sacraments. Therefore, to them, the sacraments cannot be infallible "signs and testimonies" of the divine will against the individual.

- The faith or unbelief of those who use the sacraments does not change the nature of the sacraments, as the Reformed and the sects erroneously teach, Rom. 3, 3. 4; but faith is necessary for a blessed use of the sacraments. This follows from their nature. They are signs and testimonies of the divine will. Through them God testifies to everyone who uses them that he gives him grace and blessedness. This testimony requires faith. The teaching of

the papists is hereby rejected, according to which the sacraments should also have a salvific effect by virtue of the mere work done (*ex opere operato*), quite apart from the faith or unbelief of the one who uses the sacrament.

The XIV. Article.

Of the church regiment.

It is taught by the Church Regiment that no one shall teach or preach publicly or administer sacraments in the Church without a proper profession.

This article is about the public preaching office. All Christians are spiritual priests according to God's word, I Pet. 2,9; Rev. 1,6; 3,10. But besides this God also established a public teaching office, the holy preaching office or parish office, Eph. 4,11; Apost. 20,28; Tit. 1,5. 20,28; Tit. 1,5. And this public teaching office should only be exercised by those who are duly called to it. Whoever presumes this office without a proper calling transgresses God's order and sins grievously, Rom. 10, 15; Hebr. 5, 4; 1 Petr. 4,15; 5,2. But a proper calling is one that comes from the church to which the Lord Christ has given the key authority (Matth. 18, 18-20). The fanatics of Luther's time pretended that the so-called inner profession was sufficient to be allowed to teach in public. But apart from the fact that such an "inner" profession is mostly based on imagination and self-deception, the outer profession through the congregation must necessarily come along with an inner profession, if someone wants to be sure that he administers the public preaching ministry according to God's will. The error of the old Anabaptists is held in our time by the Quakers, the Universalists and the Darbists.

The XV. article.

Of church ordinances.

Church ordinances made by men are taught to be kept without sin and to serve peace and good order in the church, as certain celebrations, festivals and the like. But instruction is given that the consciences are not to be burdened with them, as such things are necessary for

salvation. It is taught that all statutes and traditions, made by men to propitiate God and earn grace, are contrary to the gospel and the doctrine of faith in Christ; therefore monastic vows and other traditions of different food, days, etc., by which one thinks to earn grace and make amends for sins, are unfit and contrary to the gospel.

This article deals with ordinances and institutions in the church that are not commanded by God's Word but are only instituted by men. This includes the celebration of certain days, such as Sundays, feasts, church memorial days, fasting, and the like. Such orders established by men are to be distinguished from what God has expressly commanded in His Word. In the case of God's wrath and disgrace, no one may change what God has commanded, Rev. 22:18, 19. But customs and ordinances that are not commanded in God's Word are kept by a Christian for the sake of love and peace (I Cor. 9,19; 14,33), provided that they may be kept without sin and serve for peace and good order in the church, 1 Cor. 14, 40. But such ordinances of men become corrupt to the soul, 1. if the consciences are burdened with them, that is, if they are passed off as God's commandments and are to be kept as such. No Christian, no preacher and no community of Christians has the right to command another Christian something that God has not commanded, Gal. 5:1; 1 Cor. 7:23. Whoever allows himself to be commanded something in spiritual matters by men, sets Christ aside as his Lord and becomes a servant of men. Such ordinances are harmful to the soul, 2. if they are kept under the delusion that they will earn God's grace. In this case, the main article of Christian doctrine, that a man has grace and blessedness through Christ's merit alone, is overthrown. - Our article is first directed against the papacy. In the papal church, man's commandments are taken for God's commandments, and obedience to them is demanded for the loss of salvation. Then it is further taught that keeping these human commandments, for example, fasting, monastic vows, etc., is meritorious. - The Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, etc., also demand the keeping of their church ordinances as the keeping of the commandments of God. - The Methodists and other sects call many things in the things of outward life sinful which God has set free.

The XVI. article.

Of police and secular regiment.

It is taught of police and secular government that all authority in the world and orderly regiments and laws are good order, created and instituted by God, and that Christians may be without sin in the office of authority, prince and judge, pronounce judgment and justice according to imperial and other customary rights, punish evildoers with the sword, wage right wars, fight, buy and sell, take oaths, have property of their own, be legitimate, etc.

Here are condemned the Anabaptists, so teach that the Obangezeigten none is Christian.

Also those are condemned who teach that Christian perfection is to leave house and home, wife and child in the flesh, and to express themselves of the pieces touched before, when this alone is true perfection: For the gospel teaches not an outward, temporal, but an inward, eternal nature and righteousness of the heart, and does not dispute about worldly government, police, and marital status, but wants all these to be kept as a true order, and in such status to show Christian love and right good works, each according to his profession. Therefore Christians are obliged to be subject to the authorities and to obey their commandments in everything that may be done without sin; for if the authorities' commandment may not be done without sin, one should be more obedient to God than to men, Acts 5:29. 5,29.

The temporal authorities are God's order. Therefore, Christians can also be in magisterial offices without sin and fulfill all the duties of the same. It also follows that a Christian owes obedience to the worldly authorities, as this is clearly stated in God's Word, for example Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Petr. 2:13-20. Only if the authorities demanded something of the Christians that is contrary to God's word, for example,

if the authorities wanted to impose a false faith on them and order them to do something in ecclesiastical matters at all, would it be the case that they would have to refuse obedience to the authorities and obey God more than men, Acts 5:29.. The Anabaptist heresy condemned in this article is led in this country especially by the Mennonites and Quakers. They say that a Christian may not administer an office of authority and that it is a sin to wage wars, to punish evildoers with death and to take an oath demanded by the authorities. - Furthermore, our article condemns monasticism. Monasticism introduces a false concept of a truly Christian life. Christian perfection does not consist in outward flight from the world, but in a Christian being found in true faith and the right fear of God, and in serving his neighbor in love in the worldly position in which God has placed him.

The XVII. article.

Of the Second Coming of Christ to Judgment.

It is also taught that our Lord Jesus Christ will come to judge on the Last Day and raise all the dead, giving eternal life and joy to the faithful and elect, but condemning the godless and the devils to hell and eternal punishment.

Therefore, the Anabaptists are rejected, teaching that the devils and damned people will not have eternal torment and torture.

Item, here some Jewish teachings are rejected, which also happen now and then, that before the resurrection of the dead all saints, the pious, have a worldly kingdom and will destroy all the ungodly.

The eternity of the punishments in hell is denied in this country, especially by the Unitarians and the Universalists. But as clearly as the Holy Scripture teaches an eternal blessedness of the believers, it also teaches an eternal damnation of the unbelievers, Matth. 25, 46; Dan. 12, 2; Mark. 9, 42-48; Revelation 20, 10. Like all errors, this error, by which the eternity of the punishments of hell is denied, has its reason in the fact that one wants to judge in God's matters according to his own head and feeling. Under the pretense of compassion and mercy, God's word

is overturned. — With the "Jewish doctrines" rejected here, the chiliasm so popular and so widespread in our time is also rejected, that is, the doctrine of a thousand-year glorious, visible kingdom of Christ here on earth still in the future. The Holy Scripture clearly teaches that the kingdom of Christ will be in the form of the cross until the Last Day, and that the more the Last Day approaches, the more it will be under the cross, Matth. 24, 6 ff; 37ff; Luk. 18, 8; Matth. 13, 24-30. The thousand years mentioned in Revelation 20 are not about a visible kingdom of Christ on earth that is still to come, but about the fact that the souls of the believers reign with Christ in heaven.

The XVIII. Article.

Of free will.

Of free will it is taught that man has some free will to live outwardly honorable and to choose among the things which reason apprehends; but without grace, help, and action of the Holy Spirit, man is not able to become pleasing to God, to heartily fear or believe God, or to cast out of the heart inherent evil desire, but this is done by the Holy Spirit, which is given through God's Word; for Paul says 1 Cor. 2:14, "The natural man hears nothing of the Spirit of God."

And so that one may recognize that in this no novelty is taught, so these are the clear words of Augustini of the free will, as now and here written from the 3. Book Hypognostikon: "We confess that in all men there is a free will; for they have ever all natural, innate understanding and reason, not that they are able to do anything with God, but to love and fear God from the heart, but only in outward works of this life they have liberty to choose good or evil. Good, I mean, that nature is able to do, as to work in the field or not,

to eat, to drink, to go to a friend or not, to put on or take off a garment, to build, to take a wife, to do a trade, and the like, something useful and good; all which, however, neither is nor exists without God, but is all of him and through him. On the other hand, man can also do evil of his own choice, as kneeling before an idol, committing manslaughter," etc.

By free will is understood the capacity of man to perform good or evil according to his own choice and by his own efforts. Does man have such a free will? To answer this question correctly, one must distinguish between external or civil and spiritual or heavenly things. In the former things, the natural man has free will to some extent; in the latter, free will is nothing. The natural man can learn something useful for this life or not, can do a trade or not; yes, the man can also be outwardly and civilly righteous by natural forces, so that the worldly judge finds nothing to punish in him. Most people, however, do not achieve this outward righteousness, as daily experience shows. That is why our confession says that man has a certain amount of free will to live outwardly honestly. In spiritual matters, however, the natural man is not able to do anything. He does not have the slightest strength to turn to God, to believe God's word, to truly fear and love God. This is clearly stated in the Holy Scriptures 1 Cor. 2,14; Ps. 14, 3; Gen. 8, 21; it calls man dead in sins, Eph. 2,1; Col. 2,13. When a man is converted, believes God's word and begins to heartily fear and love God, God Himself has worked this in him through the Holy Spirit, 1 Cor. 12:3; Phil. 2:13. Where this is not taught and believed according to God's word, the whole doctrine and the whole Christianity is sick; there God is robbed of the honor that it is He alone who makes men blessed for Christ's sake. That is why the Lutheran Church has always fought most resolutely against any error which attributes to man any power to cooperate in his conversion, to decide for himself in the same, etc. In the Formula of Concord we confess "that in man's nature after the fall, before the new birth, there is not a particle of spiritual power remaining or existing by which he can prepare himself for the grace of God, or accept the grace offered, or be capable of it for and by himself,

or apply or send himself to it, or be able by his own powers to help, do, work, or cooperate in his conversion, either in whole or in half or in some, in the least or in the least part".. - All those who deny or minimize man's original sinfulness naturally also ascribe to man, in whole or in part, a free will in spiritual matters. See the notes to Article II.

The XIX. article.

Of the cause of sin.

As to the cause of sin, we are taught that although God Almighty created and sustains all nature, yet the perverse will works sin in all the wicked and despisers of God; as then is the will of the devil, and of all the ungodly, who, God's hand being removed, are immediately turned from God to evil, as Christ saith John 8:44, "The devil speaketh lies of his own."

Among other things, the papists made the accusation in Augsburg that Melanchthon and Luther made God the author of sin. This 19th article is directed against this accusation. It is true that after the fall, in his natural state, man cannot but sin continually before God. The thoughts and aspirations of the human heart are only evil from youth. But the cause of this does not lie in God. God created angels and men perfectly holy and good. The devil fell away from God of his own free will and thus became evil, Jude 6. And man was not seduced by God, but by the devil and thus became a sinner, Gen. 3:1-14. Thus, the continual cause of sin is the devil and the wrong will of man. God hates sin, Ps. 5, 5-7; indeed, He hates it so much that He did not spare His only begotten Son, after He had taken the sin of man out of Himself to redeem mankind, but gave Him up to death. - The Calvinist Reformed, who say that God destined a part of mankind from the beginning to damnation and thus to sin, actually make God the author of sin. This is also what the so-called Protestants actually do, who claim that God created man no better than he is now, with the germ of evil in sensuality and with the germ of good in reason.

The XX. article.

Of faith and good works.

It is untruthfully charged against ours that they forbid good works; for their writings on the Ten Commandments and others prove that they have given good, useful report and exhortation about right Christian morals and works, of which little was taught before this time, but mostly in all sermons they practiced childish, unnecessary works, such as rosaries, saintly service, becoming monks, pilgrimages, fasting, celebrations, brotherhoods, and so on. Our opponents no longer praise such unnecessary works as highly as before; in addition, they have also learned to speak of faith, of which they preached nothing at all in former times; nevertheless, they now teach that we are not justified before God by works alone, but add faith in Christ, saying: Faith and works make us righteous before God; which speech may bring more comfort than if one teaches to trust in works alone.

Because the doctrine of faith, which is the main part of Christianity, has not been practiced for such a long time, as must be confessed, but only the doctrine of works has been preached in all places, such instruction has been given by our people:

First of all, that our works cannot reconcile us to God and earn grace, but this happens through faith alone, if one believes that our sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who alone is the mediator to reconcile the Father, 1 Tim. 2:6. Whoever then thinks that he can accomplish this and earn grace through works despises Christ and seeks his own way to God, contrary to the gospel.

This doctrine of faith is publicly and clearly dealt with in Paul in many places, especially to the

Ephesians in 2, 8. 9: By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God; not of works, lest anyone should boast, etc.

And that no new understanding is introduced in this can be proven from Augustino, who deals with the matter diligently and thus also teaches that we obtain grace and become righteous before God through faith in Christ and not through works, as his entire book *De Spiritu et Litera* shows.

Although this doctrine is much despised by untried people, it is nevertheless found to be very comforting and salutary to the troubled and frightened conscience; for the conscience cannot come to rest and peace by works, but only by faith, if it concludes with certainty that it has a gracious God for Christ's sake; as also Paul says Rom. 5:1: "If we have been justified by faith, we have rest and peace with God."

This consolation was not preached in the past, but the poor consciences were driven by their own works, and many works were done. For some have chased their consciences into the monasteries in the hope of acquiring grace there through monastic life; some have devised other works to earn grace and to do enough for their sins. Many of them have experienced that this does not bring them to peace. Therefore, it has been necessary to preach and diligently practice this doctrine of faith in Christ, so that people may know that they can obtain God's grace through faith alone, without merit.

It also happens to be taught that one does not speak here of such faith as the devils and the ungodly also have, who also believe the histories that Christ suffered and rose from the dead, but one speaks of true faith, which believes that we

obtain grace and forgiveness of sins through Christ; and who then knows that he has a gracious God through Christ, thus knows God, calls upon him, and is not without God like the Gentiles. For the devil and the ungodly do not believe this article, forgiveness of sins; therefore they are God's, cannot call upon him, cannot hope for anything good from him. And so, as is now indicated, Scripture speaks of faith, and does not call faith such knowledge as devils and ungodly men have; for thus it is taught of faith to the Hebrews on the 11th, that to believe is not merely to know history, but to have confidence in God to receive his promise. And Augustine also reminds us that we are to understand the word "faith" in Scripture to mean confidence in God that He is gracious to us, and not just knowing such histories as the devil also know.

Furthermore, it is taught that good works should and must be done, not that one trusts to earn grace with them, but for the sake of God and to praise God. Faith alone always obtains grace and forgiveness of sins. And because the Holy Spirit is given through faith, the heart is also sent to do good works. For before this, because it is without the Holy Spirit, it is too weak; for this it is in the power of the devil, who drives poor human nature to many sins; as we see in the philosophers, who undertook to live honestly and blamelessly, and yet did not do so, but fell into many great, public sins. So it is with man, if he is without the Holy Spirit apart from right faith, and governs himself solely by his own human powers.

For this reason, the doctrine of faith is not to be reproached for forbidding good works, but rather to be praised for teaching to do good works and for offering help on

how to do good works. For apart from faith and apart from Christ, human nature and ability are far too weak to do good works, to call upon God, to have patience in suffering, to love one's neighbor, to carry out commanded offices diligently, to be obedient, to avoid evil lusts. Such high and right works may not be done without the help of Christ, as he himself says John 15:5: "Without me you can do nothing," etc.

This 20th article is a further elaboration of what was said in article VI. What gave rise to this further elaboration can be seen from what was said at the beginning of this article: "Our fathers are charged with falsehood that they forbid good works." Because our fathers confessed the right doctrine of justification, they had to hear over and over again the reproach that was also made to the apostle Paul by the teachers of the law, Rom. 3, 8; 6, 1. 15. Especially the godless v. Eck did not tire of reviling that Luther taught a freedom of the flesh, and therein lay a main reason why the people fell for Luther. An interpreter of the Augsburg Confession says of this 20th article: "This article is a true adornment of our confession. Every Christian who reads this article will agree with this.

The XXI article.

Of the worship of the saints.

Of the service of the saints, ours teaches that the saints are to be remembered, so that we may strengthen our faith when we see how they have been graced, and also how they have been helped by faith; and that examples are to be taken of their good works, each according to his profession, just as the imperial majesty may blessedly and divinely follow the example of David in waging war against the Turks; for both are in royal office, which demands the protection and protection of their subjects. By Scripture, however, one cannot prove that one should call upon the saints or seek help from them; for there is only one reconciler and mediator set between God and men, Jesus Christ,

1 Tim. 2:5, who is the only Savior, the only supreme priest, the mercy seat and intercessor before God, Rom. 8:34. And he alone has promised that he will hear our prayer. This is also the highest service of God according to the Scriptures, that we seek and call upon Him in all our needs and concerns. 1 John 2:1: "If anyone sins, we have an advocate with God who is righteous, Jesus Christ.

This is almost the sum of the doctrine that is preached and taught in our churches for proper Christian instruction and consolation of consciences, and also for the correction of believers; as we would never willingly put our own souls and consciences in the highest and greatest danger before God with the misuse of the divine name or word, or impose on our children and descendants any other doctrine than that which is in accordance with the pure divine word and Christian truth. If this is clearly founded in Holy Scripture and is not contrary to the common Christian, even Roman Church, as far as can be ascertained from the writings of the Fathers, we also take care that our opponents cannot disagree with us in the above-mentioned articles. For this reason those act quite unkindly, swiftly and against all Christian unity and love, who for this reason separate, reject and shun ours as heretics, even without some consistent ground of divine commandment or scripture. For error and strife are chiefly over some traditions and abuses. If, then, there is no lack or defect in the main articles, and if this confession of ours is divine and Christian, the bishops, if there were a lack of tradition in our country, should be more lenient, even though we have helped to show a consistent reason and cause why some traditions and abuses have been changed in our country.

Denial of Christ is actually the essence of the whole papacy. This can also be seen in the invocation of the saints commanded in the papal church. The Son of God became man and by his vicarious life, suffering and death reconciled men with God. Thus, He is the one Mediator between God and men (1 Tim. 2:5), the one Advocate who represents us before God (Rom. 8:34; 1 John 2:1). "Verily, verily, I say unto you," saith he himself, "if ye shall ask the Father any thing in my name, he will give it you," John 16:23. And "this also is the highest service of God, that one seek and call upon the same Jesus Christ in all his needs and requests with all his heart," says our article. The papal church, however, teaches to call upon the saints and makes them mediators and intercessors in the place of Christ, the only mediator and intercessor. The Apology says in the explanation of this article: "They [the papists] invent for themselves a delusion, as if Christ were a severe judge and the saints gracious, kind mediators, thus fleeing to the saints, shying away from Christ as from a tyrant, trusting more in the kindness of the saints than in the kindness of Christ, running away from Christ and seeking help from the saints. And how well they have succeeded in taking Christ out of the hearts and mouths of the poor, blinded people! Those who live among papists know that "Saint Joseph," "Saint Jacob," "Saint Mary, Queen of Heaven, Mother of Mercy," pass their lips much more often than the name of Christ. - The invocation of the saints is naked idolatry and therefore absolutely rejected in this article. But the saints should be remembered as examples of faith and love, Hebr. 13, 7; 11, 4-40; 12, 1; 1 Tim. 1,16. But they must be true saints, that is, poor sinners who wanted to be saved by Christ's merit alone; not such as many papist "saints" are, who partly did not exist at all, partly wanted to ascend to heaven on their own works and in this beginning, if they did not leave the wrong way by God's grace at the last moment, fell into hell. - Brenz relates that the papist theologian Cochläus admitted in Augsburg that the invocation of the saints could not be proven from Scripture. However, one must obey the Mother, the Church (Papal Church), in this matter. Brenz replied, "But how, if the Father [namely God in His Word] commanded the opposite?"

Articles of which is discordant, as are told the abuses, so are changed.

If the articles of faith are not taught in our churches contrary to the Holy Scriptures or the common Christian church, but only some abuses have been changed, some of which have been torn down over time and some of which have been forcibly erected, our need demands that we tell them and explain why changes have been tolerated; so that Your Imperial Majesty may recognize that we have not acted unchristianly or unjustly in this, but that we are urged by God's commandment, which is to be respected more highly than all custom, to permit such change.

The XXII. article.

Of both forms of the Sacrament.

Both forms of the sacrament are given to the laity, because it is a clear command of Christ, Matth. 26: "Drink from it, all of you". There Christ gives clear words about the cup, that they should all drink from it.

And so that no one could dispute and gloss over these words as if it belonged to the priests alone, Paul indicates in 1 Cor. 11:26 that the whole assembly of the Corinthian church used both forms. And this custom remained in the church for a long time, as can be proved by the Histories and the Fathers' writings. Cyprianus remembers in many places that the chalice was given to the laity. St. Jerome says that the priests who administer the sacrament distribute the blood of Christ to the people. Thus Gelasius, the pope, himself gives that one should not divide the sacrament, *distinct. 2 De Consecrat. cap. Comperimus*. Nowhere is there a canon which commands that only one form be taken. Nor can anyone

know when or by whom this custom of taking a form was instituted, although Cardinal Cusanus thinks when this manner was approved. Now it is public that such a custom, introduced against God's commandment, also against the old canons, is wrong. For this reason it is not proper to burden and force those consciences who have desired to use the holy sacrament after Christ's institution to act contrary to our Lord Christ's order. And because the division of the sacrament is contrary to the institution of Christ, the usual procession with the sacrament is also omitted in our country.

Against the clear command of Christ in the words of institution Matth. 26, 27, against the example of the apostolic church, 1 Cor. 10,16; 11, 26-28, against the testimony of the church in the first centuries, in the papacy the cup is taken away from the laity in the Lord's Supper. In this, too, the pope proves himself to be the anti-Christian, in that he subjects himself to changing Christ's order as he sees fit. The Lord Christ, who by virtue of his omniscience knew well what the pope would take away, expressly says: "Drink from it, all of you!" The pope, however, says: "No, not all, but only the priests shall drink from it. The fact that only the priests shall receive the cup is also connected with the striving to make the priests appear as an elevated state above the laity. To the foolish excuse of the papists that Christ's blood is received at the same time as Christ's body and thus the distribution of the cup to the laity is not necessary, Luther answers in the Schmalkaldic Articles: "Whether it be true that under one [form] there is as much as under both, yet the one form is not the whole order and institution, instituted and commanded by Christ." Furthermore, the priests should not receive the cup if, as the papists teach, Christ's body and blood, i.e. the entire Lord's Supper, were already served with the bread. - As the distribution of the Lord's Supper under one figure, so also the transfer of the consecrated host in processions is rejected in our article. Pope Honorius III. (1216-1227) first commanded kneeling before the host, and Urban IV in 1264 instituted the feast of Corpus Christi for the adoration of the consecrated host. This abuse of the sacrament is based on the false papist doctrine that the bread is changed into the body of Christ in the Lord's Supper, and that the bread

is Christ's body even outside the use ordered by Christ. Gelasius, bishop of Rome (492-496), mentioned here, declared the deprivation of the chalice to the sect of the Manichaeans to be a desecration of the sanctuary. Pope Paschal II (died 1118) also spoke out against chalice confiscation. So we have here at the same time an example, where one pope contradicted the other. And yet all popes are supposed to be infallible! Cusanus, Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa (died 1464), who is mentioned here, says that the chalice was first decreed at the Fourth Lateran Council (1215). The Councils of Kostnitz (Constance) in 1415 and Basel in 1434 established chalice confiscation against the Bohemian Hussites. The Kostnitz Council recognized that Christ instituted Holy Communion in both forms. Nevertheless ("*hoc non obstante*") it should be administered only under one form. Luther therefore characteristically calls the Council of Kostnitz or Constance *Concilium Obstantiense*, i.e., a council that sets itself against Christ.

The XXIII. Article.

Of the marriage state of priests.

There has been a great, mighty lamentation in the world among all, high and low, of great fornication and wildness and life of priests, who were not able to keep chastity, and had ever come to the highest with such abominable vices. So much ugly, great nuisance, adultery and other fornication to avoid, some priests have entered into marital status with us. They show by these causes that they were urged and moved to it out of great need of their consciences, since the Scriptures clearly state that the marital state was instituted by God the Lord to avoid fornication, as Paul says 1 Cor. 7:2: "To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife"; item: "It is better to be married than to burn." And after Christ says Matt. 19:12, "They do not all keep the word," Christ (who well knew what was in man) indicates that few people have the gift of living chastely; for "God

created man male and female," Gen. 1,27. Whether it is in human power or ability, without the special gift and grace of God, to make or change creatures better through one's own efforts or vows to God, the high majesty, is all too clear from experience; for what good, what honorable, chaste life, what Christian, honest or upright conduct results in many from it, how terrible, terrible trouble and anguish of conscience many had at their last end because of it, is evident today, and many have confessed it themselves. Since God's word and commandment cannot be changed by any human vow or law, priests and other clergy have taken wives for this and other causes and reasons.

Thus it can be proved from the histories and the writings of the fathers that in the Christian church it was the custom of old that the priests and deacons had wives; therefore Paul says 1 Tim. 3, 2: "Let a bishop be blameless, the husband of a woman." In Germany, too, only four hundred years ago, the priests were forced by force to take the vow of chastity from the married state, and all of them opposed it so earnestly and harshly that an archbishop of Mainz, who proclaimed the new papal edict, was nearly killed in an outrage of the entire priesthood in a crowd. And this prohibition was made so quickly and unseemly in the beginning that the pope not only forbade the future marriage of the priests, but also tore apart the marriage that had already been in the state for a long time; which is not only contrary to all divine, natural and secular rights, but also to the canons (made by the popes themselves) and the most famous councils.

Also, among many high, God-fearing,

prudent people, such speech and concerns have often been heard, that such stubborn celibacy and deprivation of the marriage state (which God Himself instituted and left free) has never introduced any good, but much great, evil vice and much evil. One of the popes, Pius II, himself, as his history shows, has often spoken these words and had them written by himself: there may be some reasons why marriage is forbidden to the clergy, but there are much higher, greater and more important reasons why they should be allowed to marry again. Undoubtedly, Pope Pius, as a sensible, wise man, spoke this word out of great concern.

For this reason, we wish to entrust ourselves in subservience to Your Imperial Majesty that Your Majesty, as a Christian, noble Emperor, will graciously take to heart that now and in the last times and days, of which the Scriptures report, the world is becoming increasingly worse and people are becoming frailer and weaker.

For this reason, it is highly necessary, useful and Christian to make this diligent insight, so that, where the marriage state is forbidden, no worse and more shameful fornication and vice may break out in German lands. For no one will ever be able to change or do this thing more wisely or better than God himself, who instituted the marriage state to help human infirmity and to ward off fornication.

Thus, the ancient canons also say that one must at times soften and ease the sharpness and *rigorem* for the sake of human weakness and to prevent and avoid trouble.

Now this would be in this case also well Christian and quite highly necessary. What can the priests' and clergymen's marriages be detrimental to the common Christian church, especially to the

parish priests and others who are to serve the church? There would probably be a lack of priests and pastors in the future if this harsh prohibition of marriage were to last longer.

If this, namely that the priests and clergy may become married, is based on the divine word and commandment, and the histories prove that the priests were married, then also the vow of chastity has caused so much ugly, unchristian trouble, so many adulteries, terrible, unheard fornications and horrible vices, that even some of the canons and courtesans of Rome have often confessed and lamentably attracted it, as such vices in the clergy would be too horrible and overpowering, God's wrath would be aroused: So it is pitiful that Christian marriages have not only been forbidden, but in some places have been subjected to the swiftest punishment, as if for great evil. Marriage is also highly praised in imperial law and in all monarchies where it has ever been law and right. But at this time people begin to torture innocent people for the sake of marriage alone, and in addition priests, whose lives should be spared before others; and this is done not only contrary to divine rights, but also contrary to the canons. Paul, the apostle, 1 Tim. 4, 1 ff, calls "the doctrines that forbid marriage doctrines of devils. Christ himself says Joh. 8, 44, "the devil is a murderer from the beginning". Which then agrees that it must be devil's doctrines that forbid marriage and that they dare to maintain such doctrines with bloodshed.

But as no human law can remove or change God's commandment, so no vow can change God's commandment. Therefore St. Cyprian also advises that women who do not keep the vowed chastity should become married, and says I, 1. *epist.* 11. thus: "But if they do not want to keep chastity or are not able to, it is better that they become married, than that they fall into the fire through their lust,

and should be careful that they do not cause offense to the brothers and sisters."

Moreover, all the canons need greater piety and equanimity against those who have taken vows in youth, as priests and monks of the majority have come to such a state in youth out of ignorance.

The ban on priestly marriages was enforced by Pope Gregory VII. At a synod in Rome in 1074, he declared all married priests to be deposed and the official acts of married priests to be invalid. Although a great storm arose against this prohibition of the pope everywhere among the priesthood and especially in Germany, the popes gradually prevailed with their will. They wanted to create a priestly army as detached as possible from human society and obedient only to their will. The apostle Paul calls the prohibition of marriage 1 Tim. 4, 1 ff. a doctrine of the devil. And this doctrine of the devil has also borne devil's fruit, all kinds of the most abominable fornication, adultery, infanticide, and so on.

The XXIV. article.

On the Mass.

Our people are wrongly accused of having abandoned the mass. For it is a matter of public record that the Mass is celebrated with greater devotion and earnestness among us than among our opponents. In this way, the people are often taught with the greatest diligence about the holy sacrament, what it is used for and how it is to be used, namely, to comfort the frightened consciences, so that the people are drawn to communion and mass. At the same time, there is also teaching against other unjust doctrines of the sacrament. In the public ceremonies of the mass, too, no noticeable change has taken place, except that in some places German chants (to teach the people and to practice) are sung alongside Latin chants, since all ceremonies are primarily

intended to teach the people what they need to know about Christ.

But since the mass was abused in many ways before that time, as it is today, that a fair was made of it, that it was bought and sold, and that several parts were held in all churches for the sake of money, such abuse was punished several times, even before that time, by learned and pious people. When the preachers in our country preached about it and the priests were reminded of the terrible condemnation (which should move every Christian) that whoever uses the sacrament unworthily is guilty of the body and blood of Christ, then such masses for sale and corner masses (which were held before out of compulsion for money and for the sake of the prebends) fell in our churches.

In this way, the abominable error was also punished, that it was taught that our Lord Christ, by his death alone, had done enough for original sin, and that he had made the mass a sacrifice for other sins, and thus made the mass a sacrifice for the living and the dead, thereby taking away sins and reconciling God. From this it followed that it was debated whether a mass said for many deserved so much as if one mass were said for each one. That is how the great, innumerable number of masses came about, that with this work one wanted to obtain everything from God that one needed, and besides that, faith in Christ and proper worship were forgotten.

For this reason, instruction has been given, as the need undoubtedly demands, that one should know how to use the sacrament properly. And first of all, that there is no sacrifice for original sin and other sins except the one death of Christ, the Scriptures indicate in many places. For thus it is written to the Hebrews, that

Christ "offered himself once, and thereby was made sufficient for all sins." It is an outrageous novelty to teach in the church that Christ's death should have been sufficient for original sin alone, and not for other sins as well; therefore to hope that men will understand that such error is not unreasonably punished.

Secondly, St. Paul teaches that we obtain grace before God by faith and not by works. Against this is publicly this abuse of the mass, if one thinks to obtain grace by this work, as one knows that the mass is used to put away sin and to obtain grace and all goods from God, not only the priest for himself, but also for the whole world and for others. The living and the dead.

Thirdly, the holy sacrament is used, not to offer a sacrifice for sin (for the sacrifice was made beforehand), but to awaken our faith and comfort our consciences, which are reminded by the sacrament that they have been promised grace and forgiveness of sin by Christ. Therefore, this sacrament requires faith and is used in vain without faith.

Since the mass is not a sacrifice for others, living or dead, to take away their sins, but should be a communion, where the priest and others receive the sacrament for themselves, this way is kept with us, that on feast days, also otherwise, if communicants are present, mass is said and some, who desire this, are communicated. Thus the mass remains with us in its proper custom, as it was held in the church in former times, as may be proved from St. Paul, 1 Cor. 11, and also [from] many fathers' writings; for Chrysostom speaks how the priest stands daily and invites some to communion, some he forbids to enter. Also the ancient canons indicate that one held the office

and communed the other priests and deacons. For thus the words in the *canone Nicaeno* read: "The deacons, after the priests, shall ordinarily receive the sacrament from the bishop or priest."

If no innovation has been made in this, which did not exist in the church in ancient times, and no noticeable change has occurred in the public ceremonies of the mass, but that the other unnecessary masses, for example, held by abuse in addition to the parish mass, have fallen, this way of holding mass should not be condemned as heretical and unchristian. For in the past, even in the large churches, where there were many people, mass was not said every day, even on the days when the people gathered; as *Tripartita Historia, lib. 9*, indicates, that at Alexandria, the people said mass every day on Wednesday and Friday read and interpreted the Scriptures and otherwise held all services without the Mass.

In this article, the proper celebration of Holy Communion is also called Mass. Foolishly, therefore, in this country even those who call themselves Lutherans have accused the Augsburg Confession of still containing papist leaven. "Mass" was the name in use in the ancient church for the celebration of the Lord's Supper. - Rejected are the papist private masses. They are called angular masses because at them the priest, without the participation of the congregation, celebrates the Lord's Supper in the corner, as it were, for himself alone, and thus wants to offer the body and blood of Christ as a sacrifice for the sins of others who do not even need to be present, and who may even be dead. These masses are called Masses of Purchase because they are held to order and for payment. - It is impossible to say what an abomination this Papist Metzopferwesen is. Luther said that he was amazed at God's long-suffering, that the earth had not swallowed him up, when he was also ordained as a butcher priest in 1607. The Papist Sacrifice of the Mass denies 1. that through Christ's one-time sacrifice all the sins of mankind are atoned for, 2. that through faith alone one can partake of the fruit of Christ's sacrifice, that is, the forgiveness of sins. Thus the whole of Christianity

is overthrown. And this abomination occupies, as it were, the center of "worship" in the papal church. And one main reason for this? Masses bring the church a lot of money, and for the people sino they extremely - convenient. People let the priest absolve their sins during the mass, so they do not have to worry about true penance. With the help of a number of masses for souls one finally gets out of purgatory. Luther writes of the papist mass in the Schmalkaldic Articles: "If it were possible that they [the papists] should yield to us all the other articles, they cannot yield to this article. As Campegius said at Augsburg, he would rather be torn to pieces before he would let the mass go. So too, with God's help, I will let myself be reduced to ashes before I let a server, with his work, be it good or evil, be equal to or superior to my Lord and Savior JESU Christo. So we are and remain eternally separated and opposed to each other. They feel it well, where the mass falls, the papacy lies; before they let this happen, they kill us all, where they are able.

The XXV. article.

Of confession.

Confession is not dismissed by the preachers of this part, for it is our custom not to administer the sacrament to those who have not first been interrogated and absolved. The people are diligently taught how comforting the word of absolution is, how highly and dearly absolution is to be esteemed; for it is not the present man's voice or word, but God's word, which forgives sin; for it is spoken in God's stead and by God's command. Of this command and power of the keys, how comforting, how necessary it is to the frightened conscience, is taught with great diligence; in addition, how God demands that we believe this absolution, no less than so that God's voice may shout from heaven, and cheerfully comfort us with it, knowing that through such faith we obtain forgiveness of sins. Of these necessary things the preachers of old, who taught much about confession,

did not touch a word, but only tormented the consciences with a long recital of sins, with satisfaction, with indulgences, with pilgrimages, and the like. And many of our adversaries themselves confess that this part of right Christian repentance is more appropriately written and acted upon than it has been in a long time.

And confession is thus taught that no one should be urged to tell the sins by name; for this is impossible, as the Psalm (19:13) says: "Who knows iniquity?" and Jeremiah (17:9) says: "The heart of man is so wicked that it cannot be learned." The wretched human nature is so full of sins that it cannot see or know them all, and if we were to be absolved only by those we can count, we would be of little help. Therefore it is not necessary to urge people to tell the sins by name. So also the fathers have held, as one finds *distinct. 1. de poenitentia*, where the words of Chrysostom are invoked: "I do not say that you should publicly present yourself, nor accuse or plead guilty with another, but obey the prophet who says: 'Reveal thy ways unto the Lord,' Ps. 37:6. Therefore confess thyself unto God the Lord, the true Judge, beside thy prayer; not tell thy sins with thy tongue, but in thy conscience." Here it is clearly seen that Chrysostom does not compel to tell sins by name. So also the *Glossa* teaches in *Decretis, De Poenitentia. distinct, 5, cap. Consideret*, that confession is not commanded by Scripture, but instituted by the Church. But it is diligently taught by the preachers of this part that confession is to be kept for the sake of absolution, which is the principal and most distinguished part of it, for the consolation of troubled consciences, as well as for the sake of several other causes.

This article, "On Confession," provides further elaboration on Article XI, "On Confession. It is directed against the papist accusation that confession has been abolished within the Lutheran Church. He points out that confession is by no means abolished, but is administered before admission to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, with the necessary instruction on the consolation of absolution, of which nothing has hitherto been taught under the Papacy. Instead, the consciences were tortured with the enumeration of sins and the imposition of penitential works. - To the scriptural proof from Ps. 19:13 that a perfect enumeration of sins is impossible, Jer. 17:9 is added here: "The heart of man is so bad that it cannot be unlearned." In this 25th article we also find the fitting remark: "If we should be absolved of the sins we can count alone, we would be of little help. There would remain so many unrecognized sins that they would suffice abundantly for damnation. - The conclusion of this article still reminds us that even ancient teachers of the Church rejected the recounting of sins before men as a necessary mark of the penance of the heart. - Not only against private absolution, but also against general absolution, the objection was and is raised that the absolver cannot know whether faith is present in the hearts of those he absolves. This objection is based on the erroneous idea that faith makes absolution valid, whereas it is only necessary for the acquisition of absolution, the absolution that Christ has perfectly acquired for all sinners and commanded to be given to all poor sinners, Jn 20:23. We have a good description of absolution in Luther's words: "What is absolution but the gospel, told to a single man, who receives consolation for his confessed sin by it."

The XXVI. article.

Of the distinction of Meats.

In ancient times it was taught, preached and written that the difference of food and such traditions, instituted by men, serve to merit grace and to make up for sin. For this reason, new fasts, new ceremonies, new orders, and the like, have been devised daily, and have been pushed fiercely and hard, as if such things were necessary divine services, by which grace

is earned if they are kept, and great sin is committed if they are not. This has led to many harmful errors in the church.

First of all, the grace of Christ and the doctrine of faith, which the gospel holds out to us with great earnestness, are obscured by this, and it drives us hard to esteem the merit of Christ highly and dearly and to know that faith in Christ is to be placed high and far above all works. For this reason, St. Paul fiercely fought against the Law of Moses and human traditions, that we should learn that we do not become righteous before God by our works, but only by faith in Christ, that we obtain grace for Christ's sake. Such teaching is almost completely extinguished by the fact that we are taught to earn grace by laws, fasting, distinction of food, clothing, etc.

On the other hand, such traditions have also obscured God's commandment; for one puts these traditions far above God's commandment. This alone was considered Christian life: whoever kept the celebration, prayed, fasted, and dressed in this way was called a spiritual, Christian life.

In addition, other necessary good works were considered to be worldly and inhospitable, namely, those that each one is obliged to do according to his profession, such as that the father of the house works to feed his wife and child and to raise them to godliness, the mother of the house bears children and waits for them, a ruler and authority governs the land and the people, and so on. Such works, commanded by God, had to be worldly and imperfect, but the Traditions had to have the splendid name that they alone were called holy, perfect works. Therefore, there was no measure nor end to make such traditions.

Thirdly, such traditions have become a great burden to the conscience. For it was not possible to keep all the traditions, and yet people were

of the opinion that such a service was necessary, and Gerson writes that many fell into despair because of this, and some even killed themselves because they heard no comfort from the grace of Christ. For one sees in the summists and theologians how the consciences are confused, who have taken upon themselves to draw together the Traditions, and ἐπιειχία *) sought that they might help the consciences, have had so much to do with it, that meanwhile all wholesome Christian doctrine of more necessary things than of faith, of consolation in high temptations, and the like, has lain low. Many pious people complained about this before this time, that such traditions cause much strife in the church and that pious people, prevented by this, do not want to come to the right knowledge of Christ. Gerson and many others complained strongly about this. Yes, Augustino also disliked that the consciences were burdened with so much traditionibus. For this reason, he gives instruction that it should not be considered necessary.

*) *epieikeias*.

Therefore, ours did not teach these things out of sacrilege or contempt for spiritual authority, but great need demanded that they be taught about the above-mentioned errors, which grew out of a misunderstanding of the traditions. For the gospel compels that the doctrine of faith should and must be practiced in churches, which may not be understood if one thinks to earn grace by his own chosen works.

And so it is taught that by keeping human traditions one cannot earn grace or reconcile God or make up for sin; and for this reason no necessary worship should be made of it. Cause for this is drawn from Scripture. Christ, Matt. 15:3, 9, excuses the

apostles for not keeping the ordinary traditions, saying, "They honor me in vain with the commandments of men." Now if he calls this a vain service, it need not be. And soon after: "What you put in your mouth does not defile a man." Item, Paul speaks Rom. 14, 17: "The kingdom of heaven does not stand in food or drink"; Col. 2,16: "Let no one judge you in food, drink, Sabbath" etc. Apost. 15, 10 Peter says: "Why do you tempt God by putting a yoke on the necks of disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe to be saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ." Peter then declares that consciences should not be burdened with more outward ceremonies, whether of Moses or others. And 1 Tim. 4:1-3 such prohibitions, as forbidding food, forbidding marriage, etc., are called doctrines of the devil. For this is contrary to the gospel, to perform such works as to merit forgiveness of sins, or as if no one could be a Christian without such services.

But that ours are here blamed as forbidding mortification and discipline, as Jovinianus, will be found much different from their writings; for they have always taught from the holy cross that Christians are guilty of suffering; and this is right, earnest, and not fictitious mortification.

Besides, it is also taught that each one is obliged to keep himself in bodily exercise, as fasting and other exercise, so that he does not give cause for sins, not that he earns grace with such works. This bodily exercise is not to be done only for certain days, but constantly. Christ speaks of this in Luk 21,34: "Beware that your hearts are not weighed down with gluttony"; item Matth 17, 21: "The devils are not cast out except by fasting

and prayer." And Paul speaks 1 Cor. 9:27, he mortifies his body and brings it to obedience; so that he indicates that mortification is to serve, not to merit grace, but to keep the body skillfully, so that it does not hinder what each one is commanded to accomplish according to his profession. And so fasting is not confused, but that a necessary service has been made of it on certain days and meals to the confusion of consciences.

Also in this part many ceremonies and traditions are kept, as order of the mass and other songs, festivals etc., which serve that order is kept in the church. In addition, however, the people are taught that such outward worship does not make one pious before God and that one should keep it without burdening one's conscience, so that if one abandons it without offense, one does not sin in it. This freedom in external ceremonies was also kept by the ancient fathers; for in the Orient the Easter feast was kept at a different time than in Rome. And since some wanted to consider this inequality as a separation in the church, they are admonished by others that it is not necessary to keep equality in such customs. And thus says Irenaeus: "Inequality in fasting does not separate unity in faith." As also *distinct*. 12. is written of such inequality in human orders, that it is not contrary to the unity of Christianity. And *Tripartita Hist., lib. 9*, shows together many unequal church customs and puts a useful Christian saying: "The apostle's opinion was not to institute holidays, but to teach faith and love."

This article "On the Difference of Food" applies what is said in the 15th article "On Church Orders" in general to the food orders and other human orders of the Papal Church. The insistence on keeping such human commandments has had many harmful consequences. First, it

has "obscured" "the grace of Christ and the doctrine of faith," that is, the Christian doctrine of justification. Secondly, the insistence on man's commandments has come to the point that man's commandments have been placed above God's commandments. In this way, the image of a true Christian life has been lost. Those who walked in the commandments of men were seen as a higher class of Christians, while the works that Christians did in their God-ordained profession were seen as inferior. Thirdly, consciences could not find their way in the multitude of commandments of men, while they stood in the opinion "as if such were a necessary service of God." "Gerson writes that many hereby fell into despair" - Of this distress the church of the Reformation rescued consciences. This was done by proving that keeping the commandments of men does not belong to worship at all, Matth. 15, 9, and that Mosi's commandments concerning food, drink, Sabbaths, etc. are abrogated in the New Testament, Rom. 14, 17; Col. 2, 16. Also, reference is made again to 1 Tim. 4, 1-3, where food prohibitions and marriage prohibitions are called doctrines of the devil. Against the accusation that "ours" forbid "mortification and discipline", this article says that ours very seriously inculcate "mortification and discipline", but not only for "some certain days", but for all days and the whole lifetime, Luk. 21, 34; Matth. 17, 21; 1 Cor. 9, 27, "not to earn grace, but to keep the body skillfully, so that it does not hinder what each one is commanded to accomplish according to his profession. - We have evidence before our eyes that not only the papal sect adheres to its food and fasting commandments in our time, but also that other sects not only leave the commandments of drinking to the state, but also include them in their ecclesiastical program. Only where the gospel of Christ reigns in the heart can the right form of Christian life and worship be recognized.

The XXVII. article.

Of monastic vows.

When speaking of monastic vows, it is necessary first to consider how they have been kept until now, what their nature has been in monasteries, and that very much has been done in them daily, not only against God's word, but also against papal rights. For in St. Augustine's time, monastic estates were free; subsequently, since the right discipline and doctrine were disrupted, monastic vows were devised

and with them, as with a devised prison, the discipline wanted to be re-established.

About that one has raised beside the monastery vows much other pieces more and with such bands and complaints of their much, also before due years, loaded.

Thus many persons have come to such monastic life out of ignorance, who, although they were not otherwise too young, have not sufficiently measured and understood their fortune; all of them, thus entangled and entangled, are forced and urged to remain in such bonds, regardless of the fact that even papal law releases much of them. And this has been more burdensome in monasteries of young women than in monasteries of monks, when it would have been proper to spare the females as the weak. The same severity and harshness also displeased many pious people in former times; for they have well seen that both boys and maidens have been hidden in the monasteries for the sake of preservation of the body. They have also seen how badly this practice has turned out, what nuisance, what burdening of consciences it has brought, and many people have complained that in such a dangerous matter the canons were not respected at all. In addition, such an opinion of the monastic vows, which is unconcealed, has also displeased many monks who had a little sense.

For they pretended that monastic vows were equal to baptism and that with monastic life one earned forgiveness of sins and justification before God; yes, they added even more that with monastic life one earned not only righteousness and piety, but also that with it one kept the commandments and councils written in the Gospel, and thus monastic vows were more highly prized than baptism; item, that one has more merit with the monastic life than with all

other ranks, which are ordained of God, as priests and preachers, lords, princes, lords, and the like, who all serve according to God's commandment, word, and commandment in their profession without fictitious clergy; as then none of these things may be denied, for it is found in their own books. About that, who thus caught and came into the monastery, learned little from Christ.

In the past, schools of the Holy Scriptures and other arts, which serve the Christian church, were held in the monasteries, so that parish priests and bishops were taken from the monasteries; but now it has a much different form. For in former times they were of the opinion that in the monastic life one learned the Scriptures; now they pretend that the monastic life is such an essence that one earns God's grace and piety before God with it, yes, it is a state of perfection, and put it far ahead of the other states, so appointed by God. All this is put on without any disparagement, so that people may hear and understand all the more clearly what and how our people preach and teach.

First of all, they teach us about those who take up marriage, so that all those who are not qualified to be single have the power, authority and right to marry, because the vows are not able to cancel God's order and commandment. Now God's commandment is thus, I Cor. 7:2: "For the sake of fornication let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband." Not only God's commandment, but also God's creature and order, urges, compels and drives all those to marry who are not gifted with the gift of virginity without a special work of God, according to this saying of God Himself Gen. 2:18: "It is not good that man should be alone; we will make him a helper to be around him."

What can one do against this? One may praise the vow and duty as high as one likes, one may exalt it as high as one can, yet one cannot force God's commandment to be annulled by it. The doctors say that the vows, even against the pope's right, are unbinding; how much less should they bind, have place and power against God's commandment!

If the obligations of the vows had no other reason to be abrogated, the popes would not have dispensed with them or allowed them to be abrogated, for it is not proper for any man to break the obligation that arises from divine rights. Therefore the popes have well considered that in this duty an equivalence should be used, and have often dispensed with it, as with a king of Aragon and many others. Now, if one has dispensed for the preservation of temporal things, it is much cheaper to dispense for the sake of the needs of souls.

Next, why does the opposite drive so hard that one must keep the vows, and does not first see whether the vow has its way? Because the vow should be in possible things, willing and unconstrained. But how eternal chastity is in man's power and capacity is well known; nor are there many, both male and female, who have taken the monastic vow willingly and thoughtfully. Before they come to their right mind, they are persuaded to take the monastic vow; sometimes they are also forced and coerced into it. Therefore, it is not fair that the vow obligation should be disputed so quickly and harshly, since they all admit that it is against the nature and manner of the vow that it is not vowed willingly and with good counsel and deliberation.

Some canons and papal laws tear up the vows made under fifteen years of age, because they consider that before that time one does not have so much

understanding that one can decide the order of the whole life, how to order it. Another canon admits still more years to human weakness; for it forbids to take the monastic vow under eighteen years of age; from this most of them have excuse and cause to leave the monasteries, for they of the more part entered monasteries in childhood before these years.

Finally, although the violation of the monastic vow might be censured, it could not follow that one should break the same marriage. For St. Augustine says 27. *q. 1. cap. Nuptiarum* that one should not break such marriage. Now St. Augustine is not in low esteem in the Christian church, although some afterwards held otherwise.

Although God's commandment concerning the state of marriage has made many of them free and released from monastic vows, ours have even more reasons to say that monastic vows are void and unjust, for all worship instituted by men without God's commandment and commandment, and to obtain righteousness and God's grace, is contrary to God and to the gospel and God's command, as Christ himself says in Matthew 15:9, "They serve me in vain with the commandments of men. 15:9, "They serve me in vain with the commandments of men." So also St. Paul teaches everywhere that we should not seek righteousness from our commandments and worship, which are invented by men, but that righteousness and godliness before God come from faith and trust, that we believe that God accepts us in grace for the sake of his only Son Christ. Now it is ever the day that the monks have taught and preached that the imagined spirituality is sufficient for sin and obtains God's grace and righteousness. Now what is this but to diminish the glory and praise of Christ's grace, and to deny the righteousness of faith? Therefore

it follows that such ordinary vows were unrighteous, false services. For this reason they are also covenantless; for an ungodly vow, made against God's commandment, is covenantless and void; just as the canons teach that the oath should not be a bond for sin.

St. Paul says to the Galatians in Galatians 6:4, "Ye are departed from Christ, who would be justified by the law, and have fallen short of grace." Therefore also they who would be justified by vows are departed from Christ, and fall short of the grace of God; for they rob Christ of His glory, who alone justifies, and give such glory to their vows and monastic life.

One cannot deny that the monks have taught and preached that they become righteous and deserve forgiveness of sins through their vows and monasticism and ways; yes, they have even more clumsily invented things and said that they communicate their good works to others. Now, if someone wanted to do all of this in an unobjectionable way, how many things could he bring together, of which the monks are now ashamed themselves and do not want to have done! About all this they have also persuaded the people that the fictitious spiritual orders are Christian perfection; this is the praise of the works, that one becomes righteous thereby. Now it is no small offense in the Christian church to present to the people such worship as men have invented without God's command, and to teach that such worship makes men pious and righteous before God. For righteousness of faith, which should be practiced most in the church, is obscured when people's eyes are opened with this strange angelic spirituality and false pretense of poverty, humility and chastity.

The commandments of God and the right and true service of God are also obscured when

people hear that only the monks are to be in a state of perfection. For Christian perfection is that one fears God from the heart and with earnestness, and yet also has a hearty confidence and faith, also trust, that for Christ's sake we have a gracious, merciful God, that we may and should ask and desire of God what is needful to us, and certainly await help from him in all tribulations according to each one's profession and standing; that we should also outwardly do good works with diligence and await our profession. Therein lies the right perfection and the right service of God, not in begging or in a black or gray cap, etc. But the common people form much more harmful opinions from false praise of the monastic life, when they hear it that the single state is praised without all measure; it follows that they are in the married state with a weighted conscience; for from this, when the common man hears that the beggars alone are to be perfect, he cannot know that he may have and handle goods without sin. If the people hear that it is only a counsel not to take revenge, it follows that some think it is not sinful to take revenge outside the ministry. Some think that revenge is not proper for Christians, not even for the authorities. There are also many examples that some have left their wives and children, as well as their regiment, and have taken refuge in monasteries. This, they said, means fleeing from the world and seeking such a life that pleases God better than the lives of others. They also could not know that one should serve God in the commandments that he has given and not in the commandments that are invented by men. Now this is a good and perfect state of life, which has God's commandment for itself; but this is a dangerous state of life, which has not God's commandment for itself.

Of such things it has been necessary to do good report to the people. Gerson, too, in ancient times,

condemned the error of the monks about perfection and said that in his time this was a new speech, that the monastic life should be a state of perfection. So many ungodly opinions and errors are stuck in the monastic vows: that they are to justify and make pious before God, that they are to be Christian perfection, that one thereby keeps both the Gospel counsels and commandments, that they have the excess of works that one does not owe to God. Since all this is false, vain and fictitious, it also makes the monastic vows null and void.

Luther also says in the Schmalkaldic Articles that the monasteries and convents should be restored to their old use, "so that one may have pastors, preachers and other church servants, as well as other necessary persons for secular government in cities and countries. But if this did not happen, but the monasteries were to remain papist monasteries, in which one earned forgiveness of sins, then it would be better "to leave them desolate and tear them down". The monastic system in the papal church is thoroughly godless. Godless is the required vow of celibacy, which is taken both from those who do not have the gift from God to remain celibate and from those who do not yet know what the vow is about. The Papist monastic life is also sinful and corruptive to the soul because it is considered to be the most perfect state and meritorious, even super meritorious. A monk should be able to help himself and others to heaven by his merit. The monastic state was considered so meritorious that poor seduced people let themselves be buried in a monk's habit in order to be more certain of blessedness. Thus, the papist monasteries are actually places of enmity against Christ and his merit.

The XXVIII. Article.

Of the bishops violence.

Of the power of the bishops much and various things have been written of old, and some have unskilfully mixed the power of the bishops and the secular sword, and from this disorderly

mixture great wars, riots, and outrages have resulted, from which, that the bishops, in the semblance of their power given to them by Christ, have not only instigated new religious services and, with the reservation of some cases and with violent banishment, have burdened the consciences, but have also refrained from installing emperors and kings and depriving them of their pleasure; which crime was also punished by learned and God-fearing people in Christendom a long time ago. Therefore, for the consolation of consciences, ours were forced to show the difference between spiritual and temporal power, sword and regiment, and taught that for the sake of God's command, both regiments and power should be honored with all devotion and well kept as two of God's highest gifts on earth.

Now ours teach that the authority of the keys or bishops is, according to the Gospel, an authority and command of God to preach the Gospel, to forgive and retain sins, and to administer and perform the sacraments. For Christ sent the apostles with the command (Joh. 20, 21 ff.): "As my Father has sent me, so I also send you. Receive the Holy Spirit; to whom ye shall remit sins, let them be remitted; and to whom ye shall reserve them, let them be reserved."

The same authority of the keys or bishops is exercised and carried out only with the teaching and preaching of God's Word and with the administration of the sacraments to many or individual persons, according to their calling. For thereby are given not corporeal, but eternal things and goods, namely eternal righteousness, the Holy Spirit and eternal life. These goods cannot be obtained in any other way than through the ministry of preaching and the administration of the sacraments. For St. Paul says Rom. 1:16: "The gospel is the power

of God to save all who believe in it." Now because the power of the church or bishops gives eternal goods and is exercised and driven only by the ministry of preaching, the police and the secular government do not hinder them anywhere. For the secular government deals with many other things than the gospel; which authority does not protect souls, but body and goods against external violence with the sword and bodily blows.

Therefore, the two regiments, spiritual and temporal, should not be mixed and thrown into one another; for the spiritual power has its command to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments, should also not fall into a foreign office, should not appoint or depose kings, should not abolish or disrupt the temporal law and obedience of the authorities, should not make laws of temporal power and set up worldly affairs, as Christ himself said Joh. 18,36: "My kingdom is not of this world"; item Luk. 12,14: "Who hath set me to be a judge between you?" And St. Paul to the Philippians, 3, 20: "Our citizenship is in heaven"; and in the second to the Corinthians, 10,4: "The weapons of our knighthood are not carnal, but mighty in the sight of God, to disturb the assaults and every high thing that exalteth itself Against the knowledge of God."

Our people distinguish between these two regiments and powers, and hold them in honor as the highest gift of God on earth. But where the bishops have temporal rule and sword, they have them not as bishops from divine rights, but from human, imperial rights, given by emperors and kings for the temporal administration of their goods, and the office of the gospel is of no concern at all.

Therefore the episcopal office according to divine

rights is to preach the gospel, to forgive sins, to judge doctrine and to reject doctrine contrary to the gospel, and to exclude the ungodly, whose ungodly nature is evident, from the Christian congregation without human authority, but only by God's word. And in this case the pastors and churches are obliged to be obedient to the bishops, according to this saying of Christ, Luke 10:16: "He that heareth you heareth me." But where they teach, set forth or teach something contrary to the Gospel, we have God's command in such a case that we are not to be obedient, Matt. 7:15: "Beware of such prophets!" And St. Paul to the Galatians on 1:15. Paul to the Galatians, 1:8: "If we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." And in the 2nd epistle to the Corinthians, 13:8,10: "We have no power against the truth, but for the truth"; item: "according to the power which the Lord hath given me to amend, and not to destroy". So also spiritual law gives 2. 7 *in cap. Sacerdotes* and *in cap. Oves*. And St. Augustine, in the Epistle against Petilianus, writes: "Bishops, if duly elected, should not be followed if they err or teach or order anything contrary to the holy divine Scriptures.

But that the bishops otherwise have power and jurisdiction in some matters, such as matrimonial matters or tithes, they have by virtue of human rights. If, however, the ordinaries are negligent in this office, the princes are obliged, whether willingly or unwillingly, to give justice to their subjects for the sake of peace, in order to prevent strife and great unrest in the countries.

Further, it is debated whether bishops also have the power to establish ceremonies in the church, as well as the ordinances of meals, holidays, and different orders of church servants. For those who give the bishops this power

draw on this saying of Christ, John 16:12: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now: but when the Spirit of truth shall come, he shall guide you into all truth." To this end they also lead the example of the Apostles, 15, 20, 29, in that they have forbidden blood and strangled things. In this way, they also take into account the fact that the Sabbath was changed into Sunday by the Ten Commandments, so that they respect it, and no example is so highly exalted and taken into account as the transformation of the Sabbath, and they want to maintain that the power of the church is great, because it has dispensed with the Ten Commandments and changed something about them.

But ours teach in this matter that the bishops have no power to establish and set up anything contrary to the gospel, as is shown above and the spiritual rights teach throughout the ninth distinction. Now this is publicly contrary to God's command and word, to legislate or command the opinion that one thereby suffices for sins and obtains grace; for it is blaspheming the honor of Christ's merit, if by such statutes we refrain from earning grace. It is also true that for the sake of this opinion, human statutes have become rampant in Christendom, and the doctrine of faith and the righteousness of faith have been suppressed; new feasts, new fasts, new ceremonies, and new reverence for the saints have been instituted daily, in order to merit grace and all good things from God by such works. Those who establish human statutes also do so contrary to God's commandment, that they commit sin in food, in days, and in such things, and thus burden Christianity with the bondage of the law, just as if there should be such a service among Christians to merit God's grace, which would be like the Levitical service, which God should have commanded the apostles

and bishops to establish, as some write of it; It is also to be believed that some bishops have been deceived with the example of the law of Moses, from which innumerable statutes have come that it is a mortal sin to do manual labor on feast days without offending others; that it is a mortal sin to slack the seventh day; that some food defiles the conscience; that fasting is such a work to make atonement for God; that sin is not forgiven in a reserved case, so that one first asks the reservator of the case, regardless of the fact that the spiritual laws do not speak of the reservation of guilt, but of the reservation of church penance.

From where do the bishops have the right and power to interpret such essays of Christianity, to ensnare the consciences? For St. Peter, in the Acts of the Apostles on the 15th, 10, bequeaths the yoke on the necks of the disciples. And St. Paul says to the Corinthians that they have been given the power to amend and not to perish. Why then do they increase sins with such essays? But there are bright sayings of the divine Scripture, which forbid to set up such essays, to earn the grace of God with them, or as if they should be necessary for salvation. Thus St. Paul says to the Colossians (2:16, 20): "Let no man therefore make unto you consciences concerning meat, or concerning drink, or concerning certain days," that is, holidays, "or new moons, or sabbaths, which are the shadow of things to come, but the body itself is in Christ"; item: "If ye then be dead with Christ from worldly statutes, why are ye entangled with statutes, as though ye were alive? Which say, Thou shalt not touch, thou shalt not eat, thou shalt not drink, thou shalt not put on these things: which are all consumed with hands, and are the commandments and doctrines of men, and have a

appearance of truth." Item, St. Paul to Tito, 1, 14, openly declares that one should not pay attention to Jewish fables and the commandments of men, which turn away the truth.

So Christ himself says of those who drive people to the commandments of men, "Let them go; they are blind guides to the blind," and rejects such worship, saying, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted out." If then the bishops have power to burden the churches with innumerable essays and to ensnare the consciences, why does the divine Scripture so often forbid the making and hearing of human essays? Why does it call them doctrines of the devil? Should the Holy Spirit have warned all this in vain?

Therefore, since such ordinances, established as necessary to propitiate God and merit grace, are contrary to the Gospel, it is by no means proper for bishops to enforce such services. For the doctrine of Christian liberty must be maintained in Christendom, namely, that the bondage of the law is not necessary for justification, as St. Paul writes to the Galatians on 5 Corinthians 1.1: "Stand therefore in liberty, that Christ may set us free, and be not again bound in the bondage of the yoke"; for it must ever be kept the chief article of the gospel, that we obtain the grace of God through faith in Christ without our merit, and do not merit it through service instituted by men.

What then is to be thought of Sunday and such other church ordinances and ceremonies? To this ours give this answer, that the bishops or parish rulers may make ordinances, that it may be

orderly in the church, not that they may obtain God's grace, nor that they may be sufficient for sins, nor that they may bind their consciences to consider such things as necessary worship, and that they may be guilty of sin if they break them without offense. Thus St. Paul commanded the Corinthians (1 Cor. 11:5, 6) that the women in the assembly should cover their heads; item, that the preachers in the assembly should not all speak at once, but in order, one after the other.

Such an order is due to the Christian assembly for the sake of love and peace, and to the bishops and pastors to be obedient in these cases and to keep them apart so that one does not offend the other, so that there is no disorder or chaos in the church, but so that the consciences are not troubled, so that it is considered such things as should be necessary for salvation, and it is considered that they are doing sin if they break them without offending others; As no man saith that a woman sinneth, which goeth out bareheaded without offence of men. So is the order of the Sunday, of the Easter celebration, of the Pentecosts, and of the like celebration and manner. For those who think that the ordinance of Sunday was established as necessary for the Sabbath are greatly mistaken; for the Scriptures have abolished the Sabbath, and teach that all the ceremonies of the old law may be dispensed with after the opening of the gospel; And yet, because it was necessary to ordain a certain day, that the people might know when they should meet together, the Christian Church ordained Sunday for this purpose, and was the more pleased and willing to make this change, that the people might have an example of Christian liberty, that it might be known that neither the keeping of the Sabbath nor any other day was necessary.

There are many erroneous disputations about the transformation of the law, about the ceremonies of the New Testament, about the change of the Sabbath, all of which have sprung from a false and erroneous opinion, as if there should be such a service in Christendom as would be according to the Levitical or Jewish service, and as if Christ should have commanded the apostles and bishops to devise new ceremonies necessary for salvation. The same errors have been introduced into Christianity, since the righteousness of faith has not been taught and preached purely and unadulteratedly. Some therefore argue about Sunday, that it must be kept, though not by divine right [yet almost as much as by divine right]; put form and measure, how far one may work on the holiday. But what are such disputations but snares of conscience? For though they presume to palliate and epiic human essays, yet no ἐπιεικεῖαν *) or palliation can be made, so long as the opinion stands and remains as if they should be needed. Now the same opinion must remain, if one knows nothing of the righteousness of faith and of Christian liberty. The apostles said that one should abstain from blood and suffocation. But who keeps it now? Nevertheless, those who do not observe it do not sin, for the apostles themselves did not want to burden the consciences with such bondage, but forbade it for a time for the sake of offense. For respect must be had in this statute to the main body of Christian doctrine, which is not abrogated by this decree.

*) *epieikeian*.

No old canons are kept, as they read; many of the same statutes fall away every day, even among those who keep such essays most diligently. There

one cannot advise nor help the consciences, where this alleviation is not kept, that we know to keep such essays thus, that it is not thought that they are necessary, that it is also harmless to the consciences, although such essays fall. But the bishops would easily receive obedience if they did not insist on keeping those statutes which cannot be kept without sin. But now they do a thing and forbid both forms of the holy sacrament, item the clergy the marriage state, admit no one before he has taken an oath that he will not preach this doctrine, which is undoubtedly in accordance with the holy gospel.

Our churches do not ask that the bishops, to the detriment of their honors and dignities, again make peace and unity; although this is also due to the bishops in times of need. However, they ask that the bishops refrain from some unjust impositions, which have not been in the church in the past and have been accepted against the use of the Christian common church, which may have had some causes in the rise, but they do not rhyme in our times. Thus it is also undeniable that some statutes have been adopted out of ignorance; therefore the bishops should be kind enough to moderate these same statutes, since such a change does no harm to preserve the unity of the Christian church; for many statutes that have arisen from men have themselves fallen with time and are not necessary to keep, as the papal laws themselves testify. But if it is not possible to maintain it even with them, so that such human statutes are moderated and dismissed, which cannot be kept without sin, we must follow the apostles' rule, which commands us to be more obedient to God than to men.

St. Peter bequeaths the rule to the bishops as if they had the power to force the churches to do whatever they wanted. Now one does not deal with how to take away the bishops' power, but one asks and desires that they will not force the consciences to sin. But if they will not do so and despise this request, let them think how they will have to answer God for it, because with such harshness they give cause for division and schism, which they should help to prevent.

In this article, the difference between secular and spiritual power, or between the state and the church, is explained. The disputes between state and church, which occupy the minds in our time, especially in Europe, come from the fact that spiritual and secular power are not kept apart. The secular authorities arrogate to themselves spiritual authority and the so-called spiritual authorities secular authority. In particular, the popes have always claimed that they also have secular authority. Pope Gregory VII. (1073-1085) took it upon himself to depose the German emperor Henry IV. On the other hand, secular rulers have arrogated more or less power in spiritual matters to the Christian Church since the fourth century. In many cases, the godless principle came into effect that the secular ruler also had to determine the religion of his subjects. In some German regional churches, serious Christians had to endure persecution and imprisonment even in the last century because they did not want to comply with the ungodly decrees which the sovereigns issued in spiritual matters in which they had no authority. - In our article, according to God's Word, the difference between spiritual and temporal power is clearly stated. Both powers are ordered by God, but they have to do with completely different things. The secular authority has to do with the things of this life, has to protect not souls, "but body and goods Against outward violence". In order to carry out this office of theirs, the secular authorities can and should also use corporal punishment and the sword. The spiritual authority or the church, however, is solely responsible for the care of souls, and in order to exercise its office it needs no other means than the word of God and the sacraments. External coercion and secular punishments are completely excluded here. If church and state thus remain in the office given to them by God, they cannot come into conflict

with each other. — In our article the scriptural doctrine of Sunday is also clearly stated. The sects and even some Lutherans teach that Sunday is ordered and instituted by God Himself in the New Testament in place of the Jewish Sabbath in the Old Testament. In contrast, our Confession says here: "Those who think that the order of Sunday is established as necessary for the Sabbath are very much mistaken. For the Holy Scriptures have abolished the Sabbath and teach that all ceremonies of the old law may be abolished after the opening of the gospel". For this our confession has clear scriptural grounds in Col. 2:16. Nevertheless, we Lutherans joyfully celebrate Sunday as a salutary ecclesiastical ordinance, "because it has been [and still is] necessary to decree a certain day, so that the people might know when they should come together [for public worship]".

Conclusion.

These are the most important articles that are considered controversial; for although many more abuses and inaccuracies could have been brought to light, we have, in order to avoid prolixity and length, reported only the most important ones, from which the others can be easily gauged; for in former times there were great complaints about indulgences, about pilgrimages, about abuse of the ban. The parish priests also had endless quarrels with the monks about hearing confessions, funerals, funeral sermons and countless other things. We have passed over all these things in the best way and for the sake of glimpses, so that the most important things in this matter may be noted all the better. Nor shall it be held that in any of them anything is said or done to hate, oppose, or disgust; but we have only narrated those things which we have deemed necessary to be narrated and reported, so that it may be the better understood that nothing is accepted among us, either with doctrine or with ceremonies, which is contrary either to the Holy Scriptures or to the common Christian church. For it is

ever in the day and public that we have prevented with all diligence with God's help (without speaking of glory), so that no new and ungodly doctrine ever intertwines itself in our churches, tears in and prevails.

The above-mentioned articles have been handed over to us for the purpose of presenting our confession and doctrine; and if anyone is found lacking in them, he is further requested to report them with divine Holy Scripture.

Your Imperial Majesty. Majesty most humbly

John, Duke of Saxony, Elector.

George, Margrave of Brandenburg.

Ernst, Duke of Lüneburg.

Philip, Landgrave of Hesse.

Wolfgang, Prince of Anhalt.

The city of Nuremberg.

The city of Reutlingen.